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TRAVELS

IN

AMERICA,

PERFORMED IN 1806,

For the Purpose of exploring the

RIVERS

ALLEGHANY, MONONGAHELA, OHIO,
AND MISSISSIPPI,

AND

ASCERTAINING THE PRODUCE AND CONDITION

OF

THEIR BANKS AND VICINITY.

BY THOMAS ASHE, ESQ.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

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PREFACE.

It is universally acknowledged, that no description of writing comprehends so much amusement and entertainment as well written accounts of voyages and travels, especially in countries little known. If the voyages of a Cook and his followers, exploratory of the South Sea Islands, and the travels of a Bruce, or a Park, in the interior regions of Africa, have merited and obtained celebrity, the work now presented to the public cannot but claim a similar merit. The western part of America, become interesting in every point of view, has been little known, and misrepresented by the few writers on the subject, led by motives of interest or traffic, and has not heretofore been exhibited in a satisfactory manner. Mr. Ashe, the author of the present work, and who has now returned to America, here gives an account every way satisfactory. With all the necessary acquirements, he went on an exploratory journey, with the sole view of examining this interesting

country; and his researches, delivered in the familiar stile of letters, in which he carries the reader along with him, cannot fail to interest and inform the politician, the statesman, the philosopher, and antiquary. He explains the delusions that have been held up by fanciful or partial writers as to the country, by which so many individuals have been misled; he furnishes to the naturalist a variety of interesting information; and to the antiquary he presents objects of absolute astonishment; the Indian antiquities of the western world, here first brought forward to the public, must create admiration. It will be seen that the fallen race who now inhabit America are the successors of men who have been capable of architectural and other work, that would do honor to any people or any age; and the remarkable antiquities which he describes cannot but induce a still more minute enquiry and investigation of objects of so great importance.

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TRAVELS
IN
AMERICA.

LETTER I.

General character of the north-eastern States of America:—of the middle States:—the southern. Town of Pittsburg. Alleghany mountains. Lancaster. The Susquehanna. Harrisburg. Shippensburg, and Strasburg. Interesting account of a tavern and its occupiers. Bedford. Sublimity and horrors of a night passed in a forest. Thoughts on natural history:—St. Pierre.

Pittsburg, Pennsylvania, October, 1806.

DEAR SIR,

I THOUGHT that you knew my heart too well, to attribute my silence to a decay of affection; and I had hopes that you entertained too just an opinion of my head, to expect from me extraordinary discoveries in philosophy or

politics. At the same time, I hope to convince you that my supposed neglect has operated to the advantage of my correspondence.

The American states through which I have passed, are unworthy of your observation. Those to the north-east are indebted to nature for but few gifts: they are better adapted for the business of grazing than for corn. The climate is equally subject to the two extremes of burning heat and excessive cold; and bigotry, pride, and a malignant hatred to the mother-country, characterize the inhabitants. The middle States are less contemptible: they produce grain for exportation; but wheat requires much labour, and is liable to blast on the sea-shore. The national features here are not strong, and those of different emigrants have not yet composed a face of local deformity: we still see the liberal English, the ostenta-

tious Scotch, the warm-hearted Irish, the penurious Dutch, the proud German, the solemn Spaniard, the gaudy Italian, and the profligate French. What kind of character is hereafter to rise from an amalgamation of such discordant materials, I am at a loss to conjecture.

For the southern States, nature has done much, but man little. Society is here in a shameful degeneracy: an additional proof of the pernicious tendency of those detestable principles of political licentiousness, which are not only adverse to the enjoyment of practical liberty, and to the existence of regular authority, but destructive also of comfort and security in every class of society; doctrines here found by experience, to make men turbulent citizens, abandoned Christians, inconstant husbands, unnatural fathers, and treacherous friends. I shun the humilia-

ting delineation, and turn my thoughts to happier regions which afford contemplation without disgust; and where mankind, scattered in *small* associations, are not totally depraved or finally corrupt. Under such impressions, I shall write to you with pleasure and regularity; trusting to your belief, that my propensity to the cultivation of literature has not been encouraged in a country where sordid speculators alone succeed, where classic fame is held in derision, where grace and taste are unknown, and where the ornaments of style are condemned or forgotten. Thus guarding you against expectations that I should fear to disappoint, I proceed to endeavour at gratifying the curiosity which my ramblings excite in your mind.

The town of Pittsburg* is distant

* Situated in latitude 40° 26′ north, and longitude 79° 48′ west from London.

rather more than 300 miles from Philadelphia: of which space, 150 miles are a continued succession of mountains, serving as a barrier against contending seas; and as a pregnant source of many waters, which take opposite directions, and after fertilizing endless tracts, and enriching various countries, are lost in the immensity of the Mexican Gulf and the Atlantic Ocean. Knowing the road to be mountainous and stony, I preferred travelling on horseback to going in a stage-coach, that is seven or eight days on the road; and the fare in which, for the whole journey, is twenty-four dollars. The first sixty miles were a turnpike road; and my horse, which cost me only eighty dollars, arrived tolerably fresh at the end of them in twelve hours.

The place at which I stopped was Lancaster, the county-town of Pennsylvania. The inhabitants are chiefly Dutch and Irish, or of Dutch and Irish

extraction: they manufacture excellent rifle-guns and other hardware. The town is large, clean, and well built; but in spite of these attractions, I quitted it the next morning by sun-rise. Dr. Johnson was never more solicitous to leave Scotland, than I was to be out of the Atlantic States.

In hurrying along the next day, my career was interrupted by the rapid Susquehanna. The peevishness and dissatisfaction which before possessed me, were now compelled to yield to contrary sensations. The breadth and beauty of the river, the height and grandeur of its banks, the variation of scenery, the verdure of the forests, the murmur of the water, and the melody of birds, all conspired to fill my mind with vast and elevated conceptions.

Harrisburg, a handsome Dutch town, stands on the east bank of this river. I did not stop however, but pursued

my course to Carlisle; which has a college, and the reputation of a place of learning. This may be so but, I have the misfortune to dispute it; for though indeed I saw an old brick building called *the university*, in which the scholars had not left a whole pane of glass, I did not meet a man of decent literature in the town. I found a few who had learning enough to be pedantic and impudent in the society of the vulgar, but none who had arrived at that degree of science which could delight and instruct the intelligent.

Having thus no motive for delay here, I passed on to Shippensburg and Strasburg, both German or Dutch towns; the latter at the foot of the stupendous mountains before alluded to, and which are called the Alleghany. During the first and second days, I met with no considerable objects but such as I was prepared to expect; immense hills, bad

roads, and frightful precipices: I drove my horse before me most of the distance. On the evening of the third, about dusk, I arrived at the tavern where I meant to repose: it was a miserable log-house, filled with emigrants who were in their passage to the Ohio; and a more painful picture of human calamity was seldom beheld:—old men embarking in distant arduous undertakings, which they could never live to see realized; their children going to a climate destructive to youth; and the wives and mothers partaking of all these sufferings, to become victims in their turn to the general calamity. This scene held out no very strong temptation to me for passing the night here, but there was no alternative; for my horse was tired, the wolves were out, and the roads impassable in the dark: the fire-side too, and all the seats, were occupied, and the landlord was drunk.

I was too much engrossed however with the distress round me, sensibly to feel my own. I stood in fact motionless, with my arms folded, and fell into a reverie; from which I was roused by a meteor crossing the room, or at least my surprise was as great as would have been occasioned by such a phenomenon. It was a beautiful young woman,

> ——————"Fitted or to shine in courts
> With unaffected grace; or walk the plain,
> With innocence and meditation join'd
> In soft assemblage."

She spoke to her father, and then addressed me with infinite grace: lamenting that their accommodation "was so bad for a gentleman;" and offering to make a fire and serve supper up stairs, and strive to make me as comfortable as the situation and circumstances would permit. In a short time she was as good as her word; and invited me to a small room, clean and warm, with supper al-

ready served. In all this proceeding; in her conversation, actions, and manners; there was a merit which could not be the result of a common mind. Her person was tall and elegant: her eyes were large and blue: her features regular and animated; and expressive of a pride and dignity which the meanest clothing, and the strongest consciousness of her humble circumstances in life, could neither destroy nor conceal. I desired her to sit down, and then questioned her on local subjects: her answers were neat and sensible. I extended my inquiries to a wider range; talking of natural curiosities in the neighbourhood, the face of the country, manners, books, &c. and to these particulars also her replies were judicious, intelligent, and unassuming. She had read much; and the impression which this had made on her, appeared favourable to her retired life, to virtue, and to feeling: too

much so to the latter; for when I exclaimed, "By what accident has one so lovely in person, so improved in understanding, and so delicate in mind, become the inhabitant of these terrific mountains, these gloomy woods?" she burst into tears, and left me. I then rose from table, called the ostler, and saw my horse fed; and this man explained the mystery. The young lady's father, it seems, was an Irishman; who, having been once opulent, gave his children the most refined education which his country could afford. He was respected and happy: they were admired and beloved. In an evil day, some jealous demon infused into his heart disaffection to his king: he associated with misguided characters, was implicated in their guilt, and with them banished from his native land. His amiable and suffering family followed him to America; where, soon after his arrival, some swindlers stripped

him of most of his money. He took refuge in profligacy and drink; his wife died of a broken heart; his child is fading in unmerited misery; and he is left to drag on a wretched existence, which in the moments of reason must be embittered to a degree too painful to hear, or almost to think of.

I saw Eleanor (for that was the name of this interesting creature) the next morning, when she had returned to her usual duties and apparent serenity. I had an elegant edition of Thomson in my pocket, which attracted her notice as it lay on my supper-table the night before. I now wrote a romantic but just compliment on a blank leaf in it, and then presented to her the book: after which I instantly mounted my horse, and resumed my journey; deprecating the revolutionary politics which had brought this family, and thousands of others, into such ignominy and distress.

The town of Bedford is next to Strasburg, and consists of about two hundred well built houses. It is natural to inquire into the motives which could tempt men to settle in a region so remote from commerce and the world: iron-mines, and some fine *interval land* (as it is here called), were the original attractions. Bedford is but a short day's ride from the highest mountain of the prodigious chain; and which, by way of distinction, is called exclusively "the Alleghany:" the others having received names from local events, or something remarkable in their features; as *Coneeocheque* or Bloody Mountains, the Three Brothers, the Walnut and the Laurel Hills, &c. I travelled along so attentive to the objects round me, and wasted so much time in visionary speculations, that I was overtaken by night on the summit of the mountain; where the road was narrow and bounded by fright-

ful precipices. If I attempted to advance, a sudden and rapid death was unavoidable; or if I remained where I was, wolves, panthers, and tiger-cats, were at hand to devour me. I chose the latter risk, as having less of fatal certainty in it: I thought I could effect something by resistance; or that fortune might favour me by giving a more suitable supper, and a different hunting-ground, to the ferocious animals.

The progress of night was considerably advanced; and the powerful exhalations of the preceding sun, for want of wind to disperse or waft them to other parts, were returning to their parent woods. They at first hovered, in the form of transparent clouds, over small creeks and rivulets in the intervals of the mountain; and then assumed a wider range, spreading over the entire valley, and giving to it the appearance of a calm continued sea. This beautiful transfiguration took

place several hundred feet below me; while the summit of the hill had no mist, and the dew was not sensible. The moon shone, but capriciously: for though some places were adorned with her brightest beams, and exhibited various fantastic forms and colours, others were unaffected by her light, and awfully maintained an unvaried gloom; a "darkness visible," conveying terror and dismay.

Such apprehensions were gaining fast on my imagination, till an object of inexpressible sublimity gave a different direction to my thoughts, and seized the entire possession of my mind. The heavenly vault appeared to be all on fire: not exhibiting the stream or character of the aurora-borealis; but an immensity vivid and clear, through which the stars, detached from the firmament, traversed in eccentric directions, followed by trains of light of diversified magnitude and brightness. Many meteors rose majes-

tically out of the horizon: and having gradually attained an elevation of thirty degrees, suddenly burst; and descended to the earth in a shower of brilliant sparks, or glittering gems. This splendid phenomenon was succeeded by a multitude of shooting-stars, and balls and columns of fire; which, after assuming a variety of forms (vertical, spiral, and circular), vanished in slight flashes of lightning, and left the sky in its usual appearance and serenity. "Nature stood checked" during this exhibition: all was

"A death-like silence, and a dread repose."

Would it had continued so for a time! for I had insensibly dropped on my knees; and felt that I was offering to the great Creator of the works which I witnessed, the purest tribute of admiration and praise. My heart was full: I could not suppress my gratitude, and tears gushed from my eyes.

These pious, these pleasing sensations, were soon forced to yield to others arising out of the objects and circumstances round me. The profound silence maintained during the luminous representation, was followed by the din of the demon of the woods. Clouds of owls rose out of the valleys, and flitted screaming about my head. The wolves too held some prey in chace, probably deer: their howlings were reverberated from mountain to mountain; or, carried through the windings of the vales, returned to the ear an unexpected wonder. Nor was the panther idle; though he is never to be heard till in the act of springing on his victim, when he utters a horrid cry. The wolf, in hunting, howls all the time; certainly with the view of striking terror: for, being less fleet than many of the animals on which he subsists, they would escape him if he did not thus check their speed by con-

founding their faculties. This is particularly the case with the deer: at the hellish cry, the poor animal turns, stops, and trembles; his eyes fill; his flanks heave; his heart bursts; and he dies the moment before the monster rushes upon him. The tiger-cat was busily employed close by me. Like our little domestic creature of the same species, he delights in tormenting, and is admirably skilled in the art. He had now caught an opossum, as I understood by the lamentations, but was in no haste to kill it. By the action and noise, he must have let it escape his clutches several times, and as often seized and overpowered it again; dropping it from the tree, and chasing it up the trunk, till the wretch being wearied at length with his vagaries and cruelty, he strangled and devoured it.

The intervals between these cries and roarings, were filled by the noise of

millions of other little beings. Every tree, shrub, plant, and vegetable, harboured some thousands of inhabitants, endowed with the faculty of expressing their passions, wants, and appetites, in different tones and varied modulations. The most remarkable was the voice of whip-poor-will: plaintive and sad, "Whip poor Will!" was his constant exclamation; nor did he quit his place, but seemed to brave the chastisement which he so repeatedly lamented. The moon, by this time, had sunk into the horizon; which was the signal for multitudes of lightning-flies to rise amidst the trees, and shed a new species of radiance round. In many places, where they rose and fell in numbers, they appeared like a shower of sparks; and in others, where thinly scattered, they emitted an intermittent pleasing ray.

At length the day began to dawn: both the noisy and the glittering world

now withdrew, and left to Nature a silent solemn repose of one half-hour. This I employed in reflections on the immensity and number of her works, and the presumption of man in pretending to count and describe them. Whoever dares to compose the history of nature, should first pass a night where I did: he would there be taught the vanity of his views, and the audacity of his intentions. He would there learn, that though gifted with a thousand years of life, and aided by ten thousand assistants, he still would be hardly nearer to his purpose; neither the time nor the means would be sufficient for him to pourtray, with their properties, the herbs under his foot, and, with their affections, the insects that dwell among them. Yet every country has its natural historian! A residence of three weeks, and a daily walk of two hours for that period, are deemed an ample qualification for the

discovery and character of the productions of some of the finest regions on the globe. Such was not the disposition of St. Pierre: after passing many years in the laborious search of natural objects, and many years more in investigating their laws and principles, as a preparation for writing the history of nature, he abandoned the pursuit as impracticable and impious; and favoured the world merely with his Studies, which are beautiful, intelligent, and unassuming.

I conclude for the present; again entreating you to observe, that in my letters you are not to look for the graces of style, or peculiar accuracy of detail. I write from the heart, from the impulse of the impressions made by real events; and this will, I hope, sufficiently gratify your tender and amiable feelings.

T. A.

LETTER II.

Sun-rise in a deep valley. Breakfast at an inn. American forests generally free from underwood. The Author kills a large bear in the forest: its deliberate precaution on being shot. An Indian camp: gradual expulsion of the Indians into the interior, and their near extermination. Grandeur and beautiful tints of an autumnal scene. Laurel-hill. Delightful vale leading to Pittsburg. Expences at the American inns. Comfort *a term of very various application.*

Pittsburg, October, 1806.

As day approached from the east, I recommenced my journey. The sun soon after coloured "in gay attire" some of the summits of the mountains, but his luminous body was not visible for a considerable time; and when it did appear in all its majesty, its rays were for

several hours too oblique to penetrate the depths of the valley, and disperse the ocean of vapour which the preceding day had formed. It was interesting to observe with what reluctance the mists dissipated. Till touched by the magic beam, they were one uniform sheet: they then assumed a variety of forms; clouds representing grotesque and lively figures, crowning some of the highest trees. Some descended to the bosom of the stream, and followed the windings of the waters; others hovered over fountains and springs; while the larger portion rose boldly to the mountain-tops, in defiance of the sun, to gain the higher atmosphere, and again descend to the earth in dew or showers.

The birds, with the first dawn, left the recesses of the valleys; and taking their elevated seats, "joined in one universal choir." At least, nothing had more the resemblance of a general

thanksgiving, or oblation of praise, to the Author of life and light; and though it might have been but a burst of exultation for the return of morn, I preferred thinking it a grateful expression of worship, which said to me: "Go thou and do likewise."

It was near ten before I had descended the mountain, and reached a place of refreshment. You may conceive how much I was exhausted; and how much I felt for my horse, who had fasted all night after a tedious journey. In recompence I now took good care of him, and resolved to let him rest the remainder of the day. Indeed I was prepossessed in favour of this inn: for it was clean, the landlady civil, and her husband sober; three extraordinary circumstances, and which I little expected to meet on that road. My breakfast consisted of Indian bread, wild pigeons, and coffee made of native peas: no-

thing could be more conformable to the place and to my appetite. During the repast I conversed with my host on subjects which I supposed within the range of his information and capacity. I was mistaken: he was entirely unacquainted with the country round him. He never went west, because he had no business; on the east, he was bounded by the mountain, which he was determined never to ascend; and on his right and left was a wilderness which he feared to penetrate, as it abounded with wild beasts, snakes, and reptiles of all kinds.

I borrowed his gun and ammunition; and having *set* the house with a pocket-compass, took a north-west course through the woods. The American forests have generally one very interesting quality, that of being entirely free from under or brush wood. This is owing to the extraordinary height, and spreading

tops, of the trees; which thus prevent the sun from penetrating to the ground, and nourishing inferior articles of vegetation. In consequence of the above circumstance one can walk in them with much pleasure, and see an enemy from a considerable distance. I soon felt the advantage of this; for I had not been long out, before a bear fell from a tree, and rose erect, about twenty yards before me. He was in the act of looking up to the branch from which he had slipped, when I fired, and lodged a ball in his groin. He staggered, and leant against a tree: but recovering a little from the pain and surprise, he deliberately stooped to pick up a quantity of clean leaves; which with the utmost precaution he stuffed into the wound, and thus stopped the flow of blood. I was prepared to fire a second time, but my heart failed me: I was overcome by the firmness which he shewed on receiv-

ing the shot, and the means he employed to correct its injury. He tried to climb the tree once more, but could not: the vital stream again rushed out; he fell to the ground, uttered a deep cry, and almost immediately expired. He was a very large animal; his tusks being five inches long, and his paw fifteen inches by five.

I continued on my way, till I came to a wood of younger growth, interspersed with spots entirely clear of timber and marked by traces of former cultivation. I examined the place with care: it was an Indian camp; such as is often seen from the borders of the Atlantic to the great western waters, and even to the Pacific ocean. Not that the Indians originally took this situation, or any other inland one, from choice: on the contrary, their pursuits and their happiness lay on the coasts of the sea, and the banks of navigable rivers; where

they could lead a life congenial to the climate, adequate to their few wants, and suitable to their propensities. Thus they lived, regardless of the wealth and beauty of the interior, till the overflowing population of your country, and the religious and political tyranny of others, inspired a love of emigration: and brought on the shores a flood from which the native inhabitants were obliged to recede; renouncing at once their habits, their accustomed aliments and pleasures, the burial-places of their fathers, and the residence of their gods. So great was their respect to " white men," that they retreated without making any opposition; and with bleeding hearts began to settle in the back-grounds, to live on meat instead of fish, to build *tumuli* for their dead, and sanctuaries for the " Great Spirit" who they hoped had followed them into the wilderness. Innocent intentions! unassuming views!

yet these too were frustrated. Wave after wave followed the first inundation: each gaining new ground, and forcing this devoted people into the plains; where they were only permitted to live long enough to form habits, and improve the land, and then were driven to the mountains, to feel the vicissitudes of other climates, range amid barren rocks, and combat for food with beasts of prey. Even this state of miserable existence was still to be denied them. They were hunted from these dreary haunts, and compelled to descend the mountains: not on their own native eastern side; but on the western, which was the soil of their enemies, other savage nations who lived on the margins of the great waters, and who were at eternal war with the rest of mankind. The remainder of their history is obvious: mutual and repeated hostilities, the alteration of climate and mode of life, and disease and intemper-

ance introduced among them by the whites, have nearly annihilated the whole race. From the Atlantic to the Mississippi, a distance of two thousand miles, ten thousand Indians (out of twenty millions) do not at this day exist.

The camp which I was contemplating therefore, was occupied as a last refuge in the hour of melancholy and despair. It is hid in the depth of the valley, amidst the profoundest gloom of the woods; and at the period of its first establishment, must have been nearly inaccessible. I spent three hours in exploring it; and found it to consist of, 1. A regular circle, a hundred paces in diameter, the perpendicular rise of the circumference of which is at least four feet: 2. the site of about two hundred huts, placed at regular distances between the circle and the foot of a steep hill: and 3. the mounds of the dead. The space contained in the circle was

used according to the exigencies of the times. In peace it was the forum where their wise men and elders met to deliberate on the affairs of the nation; distribute impartial justice; exercise their youth in various combats; and instruct them in religious worship, of which dancing constituted a considerable part: —in war it was the assembly of their fighting-men; where they debated on measures of prudence, and stratagems of ingenuity. If the enemy attacked them in the camp, the old men, the wives, and children, with their effects, were placed in the centre of the circle; while the warriors surrounded them as an impenetrable barrier, guarding the wall entirely round, and shouting defiance to the assailants. Nearly two hundred years have now elapsed since England sent her fiery zealots and furious bigots to one part of America; while France, regurgitating robbers and pros-

titutes, colonized another. Was this a means to improve a people and reclaim a country, and can its original inhabitants be condemned for not accepting even a gospel and laws offered them at the point of the sword? Are they to be reproached for indolence, vice, and drunkenness, when most experienced instructors came among them to teach these baneful practices? Had the first settlers been animated by the principles of an enlightened humanity, how different would now be the face of society and nature here! population would abound; agriculture flourish; the wide desert be a smiling plain, loaded with waving corn; commerce would have opened extensive roads, the arts and the sciences following in her train; and the cross, that holy emblem which is now disfigured by violence, blood, and corruption, would be seen elevated on myriads of temples, and glittering through all the parts of the New World.

At four o'clock the sun had left the valley, and I had to hasten away so as to reach my tavern before night. This I effected, to the surprise of my hosts; for, from the length of my stay, they began to imagine me to have lost myself, or been devoured by wild beasts. An American has no conception of a person's being able to derive pleasure from a walk, or information from solitude: his sluggish faculties require palpable and active objects to give them exercise. I mention this to account for the astonishment of my landlord at my delay, and his insensibility to the enjoyments which a contemplative walk would every day present. Finding that I could derive no information from such a man (who knew nothing of the camp; and, as his wife said, "did not heed such things, not he"), I hastily took some refreshment; retired to rest; and departed

next morning, with a fine sun, and the promise of a delightful day.

Autumn had already begun to shed a varied tint over the numerous subjects of her rich domain. I amused myself in endeavouring to count and classify the colours which she employs to diversify nature, and distinguish her reign from that of the other seasons: but I made little progress; for the scene was too grand, extensive, and sublime, to come under the confined controul of human calculation. I was on a vast eminence, commanding a view of a valley in which stood millions of trees, and from which many millions more gradually rose in the form of an immense amphitheatre. It appeared as if every tree, though many were of the same class, had shades, hues, and characters, peculiar to itself; derived from individual attitude, growth, and soil; and presentation to heavenly bodies, and the

emanations issuing from them. It was one of those scenes on which the mind could dwell with infinite rapture; but which can never be described with justice and truth, except by one inspired by Him

"Whose breath perfumes them, and whose pencil paints."

But

"Who can paint
Like nature? Can Imagination boast,
Amidst her gay creation, hues like these?"

THOMSON.

Between this spot and Pittsburg I passed two flourishing little towns; first crossing the celebrated Laurel-hill, so called from its ridge being for several miles crowned with trees of that kind. This hill is remarkably steep and stony. Nothing worthy of mention struck my notice till I arrived within three miles of Pittsburg, when I descended into the beautiful vale which leads into that town. It was impossible to behold any thing

more interesting than this: it extended three miles on a perfect level, cultivated in the highest degree; bounded by a rising ground on the left, and a transparent river on the right; and leading to a well inhabited town where I meant to repose after a journey of 320 miles, 150 of them over stupendous mountains and barren rocks. Such a sight could not fail of gratifying and enchanting me; giving serenity to the mind, and gratitude to the heart; and awakening in the soul its most amiable and distinguished affections.

In sending you this sketch, I have not stopped to detail the inferior particulars of the journey. It is of little consequence where a traveller sleeps, where and what he eats, and whether he was comfortable, &c. In travelling along this and every other road in America, a stranger is furnished with a route indicating the best inns and their distances from each

other: as to the expence, it seldom varies; being a quarter of a dollar for lodging, the same sum for every meal, and half a dollar a night for a horse. With regard to *comfort*, that favourite British word is too vague for general explanation; as it relates to comparison, habit, and sensibilities. If the English miss cleanliness, the French coffee, the Dutch tobacco, the Germans beer, the Russians oil, the Italians chocolate, the Spaniards garlic, the Turks opium, the Tartars milk, the Indians rice, and so on through every nation, they never consider themselves *comfortable;* and hence we hear the same house praised by one guest, and vilified by another.

LETTER III.

Situation and description of Pittsburg. Its manufactories, ship-building, and population. State of education here. Character and persons of the ladies. Religious sects. Schools. Market-house, and prices of provisions. Price of land. Amusements.

Pittsburg, October, 1806.

I AM afraid I tire your patience: three letters from this place, and yet it remains undescribed! Excuse me: I now commence.

No inland town in the United States, or perhaps in the world, can boast of a position superior to this, both as to its beauty, and also the many advantages with which it is attended; it being delightfully situated at the head of the Ohio, and on the point of land formed

by the junction of the Alleghany and the Monongahela rivers. The site of the old French garrison Duquesne, which was taken by general Forbes in the year 1758, is immediately at the confluence of the two streams; and commands a charming view of each, as well as of the Ohio. The British garrison Fort Pitt (so called after the late earl of Chatham, and erected near the former post), higher up on the Monongahela, was once a place of some consequence as a frontier settlement, but fell into decay on being given up by its founders. As it was included in one of the manors of the Penn family, it was sold by the proprietaries; and now makes a part of the town of Pittsburg, and is laid out in town-lots. Fort Fayette, built a very few years since, is also within the limits of the town, on the bank of the Alleghany: a garrison is at present kept there; and for the most

part, it is made head-quarters for the army of the United States.

The spot on which this town stands, is so commanding (in the military phrase) that it has been emphatically called the key to the western country; and its natural situation is peculiarly grand and striking. Blest as it is with numerous advantages, there is nothing surprising in its having increased rapidly within the last few years. It contains about four hundred houses, many of them large and elegantly built with brick; and above two thousand inhabitants. It abounds with mechanics, who cultivate most of the different manufactures that are to be found in any other part of the United States; and possesses upward of forty retail *stores*,* which all seem

* The common name for the places of sale in America and the colonies; differing from *shops* in being generally larger, and always dealing in a vast variety of articles, including every thing that can be expected to be asked for.

continually busy. To this place most of the goods conveyed in waggons over the mountains in spring and autumn, and destined for the Kentucky and Louisiana trade, are brought, to be ready for embarkation.

Many valuable manufactories have been lately established here; among which are those of glass, nails, hats, and tobacco. The manufacture of glass is carried on extensively, and that article is made of an excellent quality. There are two establishments of this sort; one for the coarser, and the other for the finer kinds.

Ship-building is practised to a considerable extent in and near this town, and several vessels of from 10 to 350 tons are now on the stocks. They are frequently loaded here with flour, hemp, glass, and provisions: and then descend with the stream to the sea, a distance of 2300 miles; the only instance of such

a length of fresh-water inland navigation, for vessels of such burthen, known in the world.

The principal inhabitants of Pittsburg are Irish, or of Irish origin: this accounts for the commercial spirit of the place, and the good-breeding and hospitality which in general prevail throughout it.—Colonel O'Hara, and majors Kirkpatrick and Grey, have been long distinguished for the liberality of their character, and their generous attention to strangers. I am indebted to them for much information and kindness; and whenever my mind wants a subject capable of affording it the most pleasing contemplation, it shall revert to the many happy hours which I enjoyed in their society, and that of their amiable families. The influence of these and many other gentlemen of similar sentiments, is very favourable to the town; and has hindered the vicious propensities

of the genuine American character, from establishing here the horrid dominion which they have assumed over the Atlantic States.

Education is not attended to by the men, so much as by the ladies. The former enter into business so early, that they are obliged to abandon their studies before they are half completed; but the latter, having no other view than the improvement of their faculties, pass many years in pursuit of solid information and fashionable attainments. Hence they acquire a great superiority over the other sex. The ladies of Pittsburg manifest this superiority in a very high degree, but do not abuse it. Modest and unassuming, they conceal for a considerable time their embellishments; and when they permit them to shine out, it is to please a husband, father, or acquaintance, and not for the gratification of ambition or the humiliation of friends. None of their

sensations appear to be violent: their character exhibits more of a serene repose than of a boisterous energy. Their form is slender, person tall, and voice melodious; the hair light; the eye mild; the gesticulation easy; and in a word, the whole of their manner, action, and appearance, denotes a temperate soul, an excellent heart, and an improved mind. I am happy to say that these are the leading features of many American women: it gives me great pleasure to render this justice to them; and to assure you that when I expressed the supreme disgust excited in me by the people of the United States, the ladies were by no means included in the general censure. Indeed it is a highly interesting fact, that the character of women is in every country more fixed and stable than that of men: the polished females of your court, the innocent ones of your fields and villages, and the females

(cultivated or savage) of the most distant regions, have one universal indelible obligation impressed upon them; to be the entertaining companions, the charming associates, the bosom-friends, and the faithful comforters, of man. This obligation they obey throughout the world. The vicissitudes of life, which cause a deplorable difference in the conduct of men, exercise no power over *their* affections; except that their love is strengthened by our adversity, and their friendship increased by our calamities. When the yellow fever is preying on the exanimate wretch; when the vital stream urges a passage from every pore; when his servants, and the nearest and dearest of his own sex, fly the dread contagion; who stays to check the crimson effusion, to offer the last sad remedy, to cool the burning tongue, to correct the putrid air, to receive the solemn parting injunction, and the last agonizing em-

brace? who but the wife of his bosom, or the favourite of his heart?

Happily for this place, religion is not extinct, though the professors of it are employing the best possible means for effecting its destruction. They are frittering it into a thousand ceremonies, a thousand absurd and eccentric shapes. In fact, religious worship is expressed here by every vagary that can enter into a disturbed mind. Some sit still, and appear to commune with themselves in silence and solemnity: others, on the contrary, employ themselves in violent gesticulation, and shouting aloud. Some, in mere obedience to the *letter* of the apostle's instruction, to "become as little children," think it right to play and roll on the floor, tumble, dance, sing, or practise gymnastic and various other juvenile games. Others deny the necessity of at all frequenting the house of the Lord: and accordingly turn out into the

wilderness; where they fast, pray, and howl in imitation of the wolves. I did not inquire into the arguments by which the *merits* of these contradictory proceedings are supported: I was content on being assured that the better kind of people frequent the protestant church and the Romish chapel.—I cannot omit mentioning, that even the dress and the costume of the hair and beard, are made subservient to religious opinions. Yesterday, while walking with an intelligent acquaintance, there advanced toward us out of a wood, a being that appeared to me a bear in disguise; wrapped in an immense cloke; and a hat like an umbrella unfurled, covering its head. Under this impression, I could not help exclaiming: "What the deuce is that?" My friend laughed, and told me it was a *Menonite:* "a harmless creature," continued he, "belonging to a sect who never inhabit towns, nor ever cut their

beard, hair, or nails; wash or clean themselves; and whose dress, habits, and general mode of life, are at variance with those of the rest of mankind." Pity now succeeded the error which I at first entertained.

I am sorry that I cannot make a favourable report of the scholastic establishments of this town. There is but one of a public nature; which is called an academy, and supported by the voluntary munificence of the place. It is under the direction of a number of trustees; who employ themselves so much in altercation whenever they meet, that they have not yet had time to come to any mutual understanding on its concerns. There is however a master appointed, who instructs about twenty boys in a sort of transatlantic Greek and Latin, something in the nature of what the French call *patois*, but which serves the purpose of the pupils as well

as if their teacher were a disciple of Demosthenes or Cicero.

There are a few private schools where the principles of grammar, rhetoric, and a sound English education, may be acquired: the young ladies, while day-scholars, generally attend a *master*, and the present minister of the English church is principal of a school for the fair sex. His course of study is very liberal, philosophical, and extensive. Some of his scholars compose with great elegance, and read and speak with precision and grace. He makes them acquainted with history, geography, and polite literature; together with such other branches of instruction as are necessary to correct the judgment and refine the taste.

The market-house, which stands in a square in the centre of the town, is frequented almost daily, but more particularly on two stated days of the week,

by vast numbers of country-people who bring to it provisions of every description.

The beef is excellent, and is often sold as cheap as three cents a pound ;* good veal, at seven cents; and pork at three dollars a hundred weight. Remarkably fine fowls cost about a shilling a couple. Quails, partridges, pigeons, and game of various kinds, are abundant, and sold at prices equally reasonable. Venison and bear-meat also are often brought to market: a haunch of the former may be bought for half a dollar, and a flitch of the latter for about twice as much. Vegetables and fruit are plentiful, but rather higher in proportion than other articles. Butter is generally fourteen cents a pound; eggs, five cents a dozen; and milk, three cents a quart. From this statement you will readily perceive that living here must be extremely cheap: the best taverns charge

* A hundred cents make a dollar.

half a dollar a day for three meals and lodging; and there are boarding-houses on the terms of only a hundred dollars a year for board, lodging, and washing. The great towns on the Atlantic are vastly dearer; in New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, and Charlestown, the average price of decent accommodation being ten dollars a week. Those places however have the advantage in respect to foreign manufactures, wine, and liquor: for their Madeira is a dollar a bottle, but here it is a dollar and a half; and spirits of course are in the same rates. This is the natural effect of the dangerous, difficult, and expensive, land-carriage. As these latter are articles of luxury, their weight falls alone on the affluent: the other classes of society have excellent porter brewed in the town at a very cheap rate, and whiskey is to be had for two shillings a gallon.

The price of land varies with the quality, the distance from the town,

and other causes. Farms on the margins of navigable waters are 300 per *cent.* dearer than those lying behind them. Good land on the banks of a river, and near a market-town, is not to be had under ten dollars an acre; but land under contrary circumstances brings only from one to two or five dollars. Such land yields from twenty to thirty bushels of wheat, and from forty to sixty bushels of Indian corn.

As for the amusements here, they are under the dominion of the seasons. In winter, *carioling* or *sleying* predominates: the snow no sooner falls, than pleasure, bustle, and confusion, banish business, speculation, and strife; nothing is seen but mirth, and nothing is heard but harmony. All young men of a certain condition provide themselves with handsome carioles and good horses, and take out their favourite female friends, whom with much dexterity they drive through

the streets; calling on every acquaintance, and taking refreshment at many an open house. For the night, an appointment is generally made by a large party (for instance, the company of twenty or thirty carioles) to meet at a tavern several miles distant; to which they go by torch-light, and accompanied by music. On arriving there, the ladies cast off their fur pelisses, assume all their beauties, and with the men commence the mazy dance. This is followed by supper, songs, catches, and glees. When the voice of Prudence dispels the charm, they resume their vehicles, and return delighted with the moments which they have thus passed:—this is repeated frequently during the snow. The summer amusements consist principally of concerts, evening walks, and rural festivals held in the vicinity of clear springs and under the shade of odoriferous trees. On the latter I shall dwell in some fu-

ture letter: at present I must conclude with the usual sentiments of attachment and regard.

LETTER IV.

The subject of emigration from Britain considered. History of an emigrant farmer. Kentuckey peopled by a puffing publication. Lord Selkirk's colonizations. District least pernicious for emigrants.

Pittsburg, November, 1806.

As the portrait which I gave you in my last, of this town and its vicinity, might dispose some minds on your side of the water to emigration, it will be but fair and honest for me to consider that subject rather minutely, and shew you how far such a measure would tend to their happiness or otherwise. For this

purpose let us suppose an individual determined to abandon the land of his nativity, and to break the chain of early attachments and maturer friendships, to go——whither? To a country of which scarcely any but unfaithful delineators have written; to regions described by persons who meant to impose on the public, by giving lavish and flattering details of which they themselves had only heard. One place is said to be "a paradise, where man enjoys the felicities of the golden age;" and another is represented as "a fit residence for gods." Alas! these are the reports either of travellers who conceive that they must not speak the truth, or perhaps of indigent writers who never were out of London. Such compositions are a kind of romance, intended to amuse, not to instruct; to please, but convey no intelligence: and this is the dangerous effect of an opinion, that the public taste would

not endure a work destitute of false colouring and meretricious embellishments; and that an author adhering to the simplicity of truth, would be condemned as a gloomy pedant who represented nature in a dark disguise. To illustrate these observations, it may be useful to state a fact.

Only a few years have elapsed since a gentleman-farmer, residing within three or four miles of Lewes in the county of Sussex, began to entertain unfavourable notions of his country; and to believe that he was a mere slave, subject to the caprice of an arbitrary government. Perhaps you will suppose that a course of unmerited adversity had reduced him to poverty and distress, and thus given this unhappy turn to his thoughts: on the contrary, his farm was his own; it enabled him to support a large family, to enjoy the comforts and even luxuries of life, and the delight of performing acts of

generosity among his relations and neighbours. Under what delusion then did he labour? That which arose from an extravagant admiration of the French revolution, and the French *patriots!* He extolled all that they did, and trusted to all they said. They declared that the people of England were not free, but in a state of infamous servitude: he believed this; and to amend his wretched condition, resolved to emigrate. He fixed on America as his destination; and to obtain all the necessary information for this purpose, bought up every publication which professed to describe that extensive country. He had before read every one that abused and censured his own; and even his children were familiar with Jefferson's flights on Independance, the blasphemies of Tom Paine, and the political reveries of Priestley. Thus equipped, thus admirably prepared for the completion of his pro-

ject, he sold his stock and all his possessions, and embarked without any other regret than what he patriotically felt for the *calamities* and *degeneracy* of his countrymen.

You need not be told, that on leaving the land, and encountering storms and dangers of every kind, a variety of recollections must have recurred to the minds of our emigrants, and torn their hearts with the anguish of recollected and endearing sympathies. Such must have been the state of their feelings till they arrived in sight of America, but these sensations were then diverted by a succession of new and unknown objects. They first saw land to the north-east of Portland, in the district of Maine; and then coasted along the shore to Boston in Massachusets. During this period, the father was anxiously looking for that prospect of fields and villages, that general shew of improvement and abund-

ance, which his *reading* had instructed him to expect; but what was his surprise when he found that he could observe nothing but immense forests, covering an endless succession of mountains which penetrated to the interior of the country, and lost their summits in the clouds! He was not aware, that from the vast extent of America, the industry of man cannot for centuries effect a visible change in the general and primitive face which it bears. The improvements are but as specks scattered here and there, and can only be perceived by particular researches: the survey from a distance represents a continued immeasurable tract of woods, apparently occupied by beasts of prey, and incapable of affording accommodation to man.

This unexpected sight engaged and astonished him; nor were his reflections on it interrupted till he arrived in Boston-harbour, where other scenes gave him

fresh cause for wonder. A swarm of custom-officers were in an instant on board; and began their work of search, extortion, and pillage. Having escaped from these, and landed, he found himself surrounded by a number of persons who, without any kind of ceremony, crowded on him with the most familiar and impertinent inquiries: such as why he left England, whether he intended to settle among them, what were his means, what line of life he meant to follow, &c. One of them could let him have a house and store, if he turned his thoughts to merchandize: another could supply him, at a low price, with the workshop of a mechanic, a methodist-meeting, or a butcher's shop, if either of these articles would suit him. Some recommended him to become a *land-jobber;* and to buy of them a hundred thousand acres on the borders of the Genessee country, and on the banks of *extensive* rivers and

sumptuous lakes. This speculation was opposed by others: who offered him the sale of a parcel of *town-lots*, from which, by building on them, he could clear 500 *per cent.*; or if he had not means to build for the present, he could cultivate the lots as cabbage-gardens, clear the first cost in a few years, and sell the whole at an advanced price! Finding however that none of their advice had any effect, these sordid speculators gradually dispersed; forming different conjectures of the stranger's intention, and lamenting that he was not simple enough to be made their dupe.

At length he reached a tavern; where he had not been long before a succession of swindlers and impostors intruded on his privacy, asked him a new set of questions, and harassed him with proposals varying according to the particular interests of the parties. If he had a desire to become a banker, he could

purchase a share in a *capital house:* or he might buy a *land-lottery;* take a contract for building a bridge; place his funds in a manufactory of *weavers'-shuttles;* buy up unpaid-for British goods, twenty *per cent.* under prime cost; sell them by auction, and then buy a patent for making *improved fish-hooks,* and *cut iron nails.* As he did not approve of any of these plans, he was fortunately left to his little family: but not till his intruders gave him to understand that they suspected him to be a poor fellow without either money or spirit; and who came among them to become a schoolmaster, lawyer, parson, or doctor. "These professions," they added, "already abounded among them, but in the interior of the country he could not fail to succeed; and they hoped he would soon remove to those parts, as people of his kind were hardly held in repute among *them.*"

When they were again alone, his wife and himself could no longer suppress their astonishment and horror. One short hour had dispelled the reveries in which they had so long indulged; and changed the *liberal, independant, amiable* Americans, of whom they had read so much, into a race of impudent, selfish, sordid individuals, without either principle or commom humanity. Still however he was not inclined to judge rashly of them; but deliberately to examine the country, and act from his own observations.

At last, after spending much of his time and property, his conclusions were these: that the high price of labour renders it impossible for a gentleman-farmer to make any thing of land there; that no man can succeed on a farm unless he himself attends the plough, and has a wife and children capable of performing the other mean and hard work; that the

market-prices are too low to defray the expence of hired labourers, and that one of his own flocks of sheep in England yielded a greater profit than any farm which he had examined or seen here. Taxes too, he found, were numerous and increasing; yet trade was unprotected, and persons and property were insecure. As to religion, he saw it in some parts established by a rigid ecclesiastical tyranny, compelling him to go to church on a Sunday or pay a fine; and in others so much neglected and disregarded, that every house of worship was in a state of dilapidation and decay.

Unwilling to renounce the prejudice which had led him to prefer America to his own country, he travelled southward, passing through the malignant ordeals of the middle States: through the burning fevers which annually claim their thousands; and depopulate the great towns of New York, Philadelphia, and Balti-

more. He did not, it is true, find these dreadful scourges prevailing in the southern States, but he soon learnt that they too were regularly visited by periodical diseases. Slavery also reigned here; and consequently tyranny, sloth, avarice, and licentiousness.

He had now visited the whole of *settled* America; and at length awoke from those dreams in which he had so long indulged, and which ruined a considerable part of his fortune. His present reflections indeed were sound and salutary: they brought to his mind new ideas of his native land, and of its constitution. What he had seen in America, led him to recollect the undisturbed security and wealth which he once so eminently enjoyed at home. To change his own mild and paternal government, for the wild principles of the American federal system; to renounce the honour of being a British subject, for the degradation of

becoming a citizen of *such* States; now appeared to him absurd and contemptible: he accordingly prepared with eagerness to return to his native home, and is at this moment the *tenant* on the farm which was originally his *inheritance*. And yet he is happy, because he now sees all the objects of his former discontent in a rational view. Tythes, which formerly excited his disgust and uneasiness, he now owns to be necessary (till some equivalent can be substituted in their stead) for the support of religious worship; the neglect of which, as he has strikingly seen in America, renders a country infamously licentious. Taxes he allows to be essential for securing public order, public wealth, and individual prosperity and happiness. He admits that commerce *must* be protected by a navy; and that foreign possessions, which supply that commerce, *must* be maintained by a standing army: and

concludes that to expect riches and prosperity without taxes, is to expect the return of the fabulous golden age; a thing that may be wished even by the wise, but which fools themselves can never hope for.

Such is this gentleman's history! You will ask me why others do not follow his example; and when they find America contrary to their sanguine notions, return to their native home. I reply that they either want means, or are deficient in strength of mind; that they either involve their fortunes in vague speculations from which they cannot retire, or fear to encounter the contempt and derision of their former acquaintance. Some are even so base as to write, in the midst of their disappointment, flattering letters for the purpose of enticing others to follow their steps (which must inevitably lead them into the same errors and calamities) only for the sake of having companions in misfortune and ridicule.

But a more powerful cause producing emigration is, that it becomes the business of those who make large purchases of land, to exert all their eloquence and other means for inviting people to settle on it. The first explorer of Kentuckey hired an author, residing in Philadelphia, to write an animated and embellished description of that country. The narrative was in a florid, beautiful, and almost poetical style: in short, the work possessed every merit except truth. However, the land-speculator succeeded: in the course of seven years, the book drew forty thousand inhabitants into that State; but this instrument of their delusion is now read only as a romance. Such were the views also which accomplished lord Selkirk's extensive colonizations: yet the first settlers nearly perished from want, owing to the general devastation of vermin destroying the seed before it took root in the ground; and the

next fell victims to the flux and fevers, generated in the immense swamps on the lakes of the west. Priestley, under the same delusive influence, strengthened by his peculiar political and religious principles, settled in another inhospitable region; but he was soon obliged to draw a sad contrast between this and his native land: he fell into a deep melancholy, and died of a broken heart.

I cannot think it necessary to say much after this detail of facts. I ask you, could *you* dream of coming to this country, from so gloomy yet so *true* a representation of it? Though many of these facts do not operate against this town and its neighbourhood, still there are enough to deter me from encouraging any person to remove hither. But I do not hesitate however to declare, that if a friend of mine were resolved on emigration, I would recommend these waters in preference to any place that I have

seen east of the mountains; and as I have carefully travelled from Georgia to the district of Maine, you may depend on my opinion as possessing the advantages of experience.

LETTER V.

Morgantown. The Monongahela river. Cheat river, and George's-creek. New Geneva, and Greensburg. Brownsville. William's-port. Elizabeth-town. Mackee's-port, and Braddock's-defeat. An Indian fortified camp described, and interesting object discovered near it. Ancient Indian barrows, or burial-places. Remains of arms, utensils, and instruments.

Morgantown, Pennsylvania, November, 1806.

THIS, which is a flourishing town pleasantly situated on the east bank of the Monongahela river, contains about sixty dwellings; and is a county-town for the counties of Harrison, Mononga-

hela, and Randolph. As it may be considered as at the head of the Monongahela navigation, I shall here give you a sketch of that river.

The Monongahela takes its rise from the foot of the Laurel-mountain, in Virginia: thence meandering in a direction west-by-east, it passes into Pennsylvania; receiving in its course Cheat and Yougheogheny rivers from the south-south-east, and many other small streams. It unites with the Alleghany at Pittsburg; and the two rivers, as I have before remarked, form the Ohio. The settlements on each side of it are extensive, and much of the land is good and well cultivated. The appearance of the rising towns and the regularly-disposed farms on its banks, is truly delightful to passengers. In autumn and spring it is generally covered with what are here called trading and family boats: the former loaded with flour, whiskey, cyder,

apples, peach-brandy, bacon, iron, glass, earthen ware, cabinet-work, &c. all being the produce and manufacture of the country, and destined for Kentuckey and New Orleans; and the latter carrying furniture, utensils, and tools for the cultivation of the soil. No scene can be more pleasing to a philosophic mind than this: which presents to view a floating town, as it were, on the face of a river whose gentle rapidity and flowered banks add sublimity to cheerfulness; and the sweet harmony of the songsters of the woods, to the hoarseness of the falling cataract or the murmur of the quiet stream.

Eight miles below this town is Cheat river, the mouth of which is obstructed by a long and difficult shoal: a pilot should always be taken to guide a stranger through this. Twelve miles from this shoal, and on the east side, is George's-creek: below the mouth of

which is situated New Geneva a thriving town, and distinguished for extensive manufactories in its vicinity which make and export large quantities of good glass. Kentuckey and other boats are built here. A little below, and on the opposite side of the river, lies Greensburg; a small village, of which nothing favourable can be said.

Thirty-one miles from this last place is Brownsville, formerly called Redstone. This town is well known to those who *migrate* down the rivers. It is handsomely situated, but somewhat divided: a part lying on the first bank, but more on a second and higher one; both the banks being formed by the gradual subsidence of the water. It is a place of much business, and contains about a hundred houses and six hundred souls. The settlement round it is excellent: having some of the best mills to be found in the country; and among them

an extensive paper-mill, which is the only one at this side of the mountains except that lately erected in Kentuckey. A variety of boats are built here; and an extensive rope-walk is carried on, with various other valuable manufactories. The inhabitants are principally German and Dutch; and this accounts at once for the wealth, morals, and industry, of the place.

William's-port lies nineteen miles below Brownsville. The town is small, but well situated: and is increasing in business; as it has a fine settlement, and lies on the direct road from Philadelphia to Whulan on the Ohio, and other places of conveyance.

Beautifully situated, eleven miles further down the stream, stands Elizabeth-town; where considerable business is done in the boat and ship-building way. A ship called the Monongahela Farmer, and several other vessels of

considerable burthen, were built here; and, loaded with the produce of the adjacent country, passed from the midst of the mountains to the bosom of the sea, through circuitous fresh-water streams that enrich provinces for an extent of nearly 2,400 miles.

Mackee's-port, also pleasantly situated, lies eight miles still lower, and just beyond the junction of the Yougheogheny and the Monongahela. Many boats are built here; and on that account, *migrators* to the lower country generally choose this place for embarking. It is increasing in business, and indicates a likelihood to rise to some importance. A spot on the east side of the river, and eight miles from Mackee's-port, is called Braddock's-defeat, in commemoration of the melancholy destruction of that British general and his force by the Indians in the American war. Nine

miles further down stands Pittsburg, which I have already described.

As I did not stop to interrupt my rapid sketch of this river by mentioning a variety of interesting particulars which occur on its banks, I shall now return to a few of them.

The neighbourhood of Brownsville, or Redstone, abounds with monuments of Indian antiquity. They consist of fortified camps, barrows for the dead, images and utensils, military appointments, &c.

A fortified camp (which is a fortification of a very complete nature, on whose ramparts timber of five feet in diameter now grows) commands the town of Brownsville, which undoubtedly was once an Indian settlement. This camp contains about thirteen acres, enclosed in a circle, the elevation of which is seven feet above the adjoining ground. Within the circle, a pentagon is accurately

described; having its sides four feet high, and its angles uniformly three feet from the circumference of the circle, thus leaving an unbroken communication all round. Each side of the pentagon has a postern, opening into the passage between it and the circle; but the circle itself has only one grand gateway, which directly faces the town. Exactly in the centre stands a mound, about thirty feet high, hitherto considered as a repository of the dead; and which any correct observer can perceive to have been a place of look-out. I confess that I examined these remains of the former power of man with much care and veneration; nor could I resist reproaching those writers who have ignorantly asserted, "We know of no such thing existing as an Indian monument of respectability; for we would not honour with that name arrow-points, stone hatchets, stone pipes, half-shapen images, &c."

I ask those writers, what opinion they entertain of the object which I now describe: and I request them, when they are again disposed to enlighten the world with their lucubrations, to visit the countries which they profess to delineate; and diligently search for materials there, before they presume to tell us that such have no existence.

At an inconsiderable distance from the fortification, was a small rising ground; on the side of which I perceived a large projecting stone, a portion of the upper surface of which was not entirely concealed in the bank. If the perceptible portion of it had been marked with the irregular traces that distinguish the hand of Nature, I might have sat on this stone in silent meditation on the objects which it immediately commanded; but I conceived that the surface had that uniform and even character which exhibits the result of industry and art.

Animated by a variety of conjectures, I hastened to the town to engage assistance: and quickly returned to clear away the earth; which bore strong indications of having fallen on the stone, and not having primitively engendered it. In proportion as I removed the obstruction, I paused to dwell on the nature of the discovery: my heart beat as I proceeded, and my imagination traced various symbols which vanished before minute investigation. The stone was finally cleared in a rough manner, and represented to our view a polygon with a smooth surface of eight feet by five. I could not immediately form any conclusion, yet I persisted in the opinion that the hand of man had been busy in the formation of this object; nor was I diverted from this idea by the discouragement of the persons whom I employed, and the laughter of the multitude that followed me from the town to

gaze on my labour and delight in my disappointment. Though the earth was now cleaned from the general surface of the stone, small quantities of it remained in certain irregular traces; and this I determined to remove before abandoning expectations which I entertained with so much zeal. I accordingly commenced this operation, to the no small amusement of the spectators, and with considerable anxiety: for none of the indentions traversed the stone in right and parallel lines; but they lay scattered without any apparent order, and I cherished the hope of decyphering a systematic inscription. With a pointed stick I followed the nearest indention, and soon discovered that it described a circle which completed its revolution at the spot where I had commenced clearing it. A ray of triumph now shone in my countenance: the people no longer ridiculed me, but a silent expectation manifested

a desire that I might be crowned with further success. On continuing, I cleared a right line which made a segment on the circle, though it did not touch the circumference at either end. I cleared in succession four other lines of this description; and the general view then presented a circle inclosing a regular pentagon, whose angles were two inches from the circumference. The multitude shouted applause: some of them even entered into the spirit of my design, and returned to their homes for water and brushes to scrub the stone. When this task was effected, there appeared a figure of the head of an Indian warrior etched in the centre. Each side of the pentagon was intersected by a small bar, and the circle was also cut by one bar immediately opposite to a right line drawn from the head of the man. Near each line were an equal number of little dots; and the circle was surrounded by many

more; all uniform in their size, and in their distance from the circle and from each other.

The deductions from this very interesting spectacle, did not however give me the pride and delight that I ought to have felt; for in reality they destroyed my most favourite conceptions,—that the predecessors of the Indians were not only enlightened by the arts and sciences, but were a different sort of men from the present race, superior both in corporeal structure and mental endowment, and equal in the latter respect to the inhabitants of polished Europe. I was obliged to allow that the fact before my eyes abolished my theory entirely, for the representation on the stone was nothing more than a rude sketch of the adjoining fort which I have just described. The bars on the lines in the etching, designated the posterns and gateway; the dots denoted the

length of the lines, and the extent of the circumference of the circle; and the warrior's head justified the opinion which I had entertained, that the mound in the centre of the fort was a place for a sentinel of observation. The etching is deep, and executed with considerable accuracy; yet the whole has an Indian air: the head is indelibly marked with savage features, and resembles many which the modern tribes carve on their pipes and tomahawkes.

Two barrows or burial-places lie contiguous to the fort. I perforated them in many places, to discover whether the bones lay in positions which announced any particular religious or customary injunction; but could discover nothing on which to form an opinion with any certainty: though I was influenced by a tradition extant among the native Indians, that when their ancestors settled in a town, the first person who

died was placed erect, and earth put about him so as to cover and support him; and that when another died, a narrow passage was dug to the first, against whom he was reclined, and the cover of the earth then replaced; and so on. Most barrows hitherto discovered have been of a spheroidical form, which favours this tradition. The one which I here opened, might have been originally a parallelogram, sixty feet by twenty, and thirty feet high, whose upper surface and angles have been rounded by the long influence of time and accident; for we are not to conceive that the form of ancient works is exactly similar to that which they first possessed. Such indeed as are built of stone, and have not been exposed to dilapidation, do not experience any material change: but all those monuments (and they are by far the most numerous) which are composed of earth, must have undergone

considerable alteration and waste; and therefore afford a very scanty evidence of their original dimensions, or (except where bones are found) of their purpose.

The bones in the barrows of this neighbourhood were directed to every point, without any regard to system or order. This surprised me the more, as I am well convinced that in general, most of the ancient aboriginal nations and tribes had favourite positions for their dead, and even favourite strata with which to cover them; as I shall have occasion to explain to you when on the spot where the primitive Indian tribes resided. Perhaps the irregularities in the barrows of this place may arise from the bones deposited in them, having been those of persons killed in battle, and collected by the survivors in order to be buried under one great mound. This conjecture is the more probable, as there is abundant testimony that Indians dying naturally have been

always interred with great pomp, and certain rites and positions existing to this day among them, which they are instructed to maintain by their most respected traditions.

At the same time and place I found in my researches a few carved stone pipes and hatchets, flints for arrows, and pieces of earthenware. I cannot take upon me to say that the workmanship of any of these articles surpasses the efforts of some of the present race of Indians; but it certainly destroys an opinion which prevailed, that the inhabitants in the most remote times had the use of arms, utensils, and instruments, made of copper, iron, and steel. The discovery however of these objects mixed with the bones of the dead, proves the high antiquity of the custom of burying with deceased persons such things as were of the most utility and comfort to them in life.

LETTER VI.

Town of Erie. Description of the Alleghany river. Trade on it. Its rise and progress. Towns and other remarkable places in its course. Waterford, and journey thence to Meadville. Bigsugar-creek, and Franklin. Montgomery's-falls. Ewalt's-defeat. Freeport. Sandy-creek. The navigation of the Alleghany dangerous. Bituminous well. Alleged virtues of the water of the river. Onandargo-lake, and salt-springs round it. Fondness of the animals here for salt. Buffaloes: interesting narrative respecting the destruction of those animals. Destruction of deer. Birds frequenting the saline waters:—doves. Unhealthiness of the climate, and cautions on that subject. The most salubrious situations. Details of the manner in which the commerce of the two rivers is conducted. Immense circuitous journey performed by those chiefly engaged in it. Every thing done without money. A store described, and its abuses:—anecdote.

Erie,* December, 1806.

THIS town, at the head of a *portage* † communicating with the river (the Alleghany) which I mean in the present letter to describe, was a few years since *laid out* by direction of the legislature of the state of Pennsylvania. From a view of its important and commanding situation, it was planned on a very large scale; and every encouragement was given to settlers, in order to advance its progress. It now enjoys an extensive trade through the lakes; and this circumstance would render it of the highest consequence to the country, but for the fevers which check its population in a considerable degree.

Few rivers exceed the Alleghany in clearness of water and rapidity of cur-

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* Formerly called Presqu'isle.

† An established communication by land, to a navigable water.

rent. It seldom fails to mark its course across the mouth of the Monongahela, in the highest *freshes* or floods. This is easily observed by the colour of the water; that of the latter being very muddy, and the other's clear. In high floods the junction of these rivers presents a pleasing view; the Monongahela flowing sometimes full of ice, but the Alleghany transparent and free. It is delightfully interspersed with cultivated farms and increasing towns on its banks, and bids fair to be settled from its mouth to its source. The trade up and down this river has become an object of much importance to the lower settlements; there being a great demand for flour, whiskey, apples, cyder, beer, bacon, glass, iron, &c. at the different ports on the lakes, and among the inhabitants of the surrounding country. The quantity of salt which comes from Onondargo, in the State of New York, through the

lakes, and thence down this river, is so immense as to be sufficient for the supply of all the western country.

The Alleghany rises near Sinemahoning creek; a navigable stream that falls into the Susquehanna, to which there is a portage of only twenty-three miles. Thence it meanders, receiving many tributary streams: and in about a southwesterly direction joins the Monongahela at Pittsburg; where these two rivers lose their names, and together form the Ohio.

Waterford (originally called *Le Bœuf*) is fifteen miles from Erie: it was laid out by the State of Pennsylvania, and is now increasing. This is one of the western ports which were evacuated only a few years ago. In my way hence to Meadville, a distance of forty-two miles, I had to pass through *Le Bœuf* Lake, Muddy-creek and Dead-water: a passage void of any lively interest; and

dangerous in respect to shallows, *rapids*, and stagnated vapours rising out of ponds near its banks and their immediate neighbourhood.

Meadville is pleasantly situated on French-creek: it is in a prosperous condition; and is a seat of justice for the counties of Erie, Warren, Venango, and Crawford, in the last of which it stands. This town carries on a considerable trade: it contains about fifty houses, and several stores.

The distance from Meadville to Big-sugar-creek and Franklin, is thirty miles. From the mouth of the creek there is a considerable fall, all the way to Franklin. That town is seated just below the creek, where it joins the Alleghany; is a post-town, containing about forty houses and several stores; and is the principal place of Venango county. Twenty-five miles from it is a very dangerous spot called Montgomery's-falls.

The channel of the river is on the left side of a large rock, directly in the middle of the falls: by keeping this in view, there is no danger; though the descent is rapid, and the boat difficult to steer. Three miles lower is a very rocky place, called Ewalt's-defeat: the channel is on the east side, near the shore. Thence to Freeport, a distance of eighty miles, the river is full of eddies, *ripples*, rapids, rocks, and other dangers, which it requires the utmost attention to avoid. In some of the ripples, the water runs at the rate of ten miles an hour; and a boat will go at the rate of twelve without any other assistance than the steering oar. Freeport lies at the mouth of Buffalo-creek, which falls into the river on the west; and opposite to it are received the waters of the Kiskeminetas. Sandy-creek is thirty-two miles from Freeport: at its mouth a vessel of 160 tons burthen was lately launched

filled with a cargo, and thence sailed for the West Indies. This creek is but ten miles distant from Pittsburg.

The river is interspersed with several small islands, which have a very pleasing effect: though they interrupt the navigation, and render it particularly dangerous at night; as the current has a tendency at times to cast a boat on the points of islands, and on the sand-bars which project from them. I could hear of but few objects of curiosity worth observing: I visited indeed the seat of some old Indian settlements, but did not find them distinguished by the fine features which characterize the ruins near Brownsville. Not far from Pittsburg is a well which has its surface covered with a bituminous matter resembling oil; and which the neighbouring inhabitants collect, and use in ointments and other medicinal preparations. The vapour rising from this well is inflammable; and

has been known to hang in a lambent state over the orifice, being fed by fresh exhalations, for several hours together. The medical men of Pittsburg profess to have analyzed this oil; and to have discovered in it a variety of virtues, if applied according to their advice. They also extol the water of the Alleghany, and send their patients to bathe in it when the season permit: to this water is ascribed the faculty of strengthening weak stomachs, and aiding digestion. Those who are afflicted with habitual vomitings too (a complaint not uncommon here), are said to find relief from drinking it. Such persons resort to Pittsburg for this purpose, and make a favourable report of the effects of their libations: though I am of opinion, that the amendment which they experience is to be attributed to their refraining from spirituous liquors, the primitive cause of their malady; and not

to any peculiar virtue in this beautiful flood, which is supplied by effusions of melted snow from the mountains, and the waters of lakes, neither of which sources is by any means healthy.

The Onondargo, which (as I observed) has a portage-communication with this river, is a fine lake of brackish water, surrounded by springs, from two to five hundred gallons of the water of which make a bushel of salt. It appears as if nature expressly intended this region to be populated; and, as a strong temptation, placed this treasure in the bosom of hills and woods. Had it not been for these and similar springs dispersed through the western country, salt must have been at such a price as to deter persons from settling there. All the animals of those parts have a great fondness for salt. The cattle of farmers who give this substance to their stock, prove superior in value by 25 *per cent.*

to such as are not supplied with an article so essential not only to their general improvement, but their health. The native animals of the country too, as the buffalo, elk, deer, &c. are well known to pay periodical visits to the saline springs and lakes, bathing and washing in them, and drinking the water till they are hardly able to remove from their vicinity. The best roads to the Onondargo from all parts, are the buffalo-tracks; so called from having been observed to be made by the buffaloes in their annual visitations to the lake from their pasture-grounds: and though this is a distance of above two hundred miles, the best surveyor could not have chosen a more direct course, or firmer or better ground. I have often travelled these tracks with safety and admiration: I perceived them chosen as if by the nicest judgment; and when at times I was perplexed to find them revert on them-

selves nearly in parallel lines, I soon found it occasioned by swamps, ponds, or precipices, which the animals knew how to avoid: but that object being effected, the road again swept into its due course, and bore towards its destination as if under the direction of a compass.

An old man, one of the first settlers in this country, built his log-house on the immediate borders of a salt-spring. He informed me that for the first several seasons, the buffaloes paid him their visits with the utmost regularity: they travelled in single files, always following each other at equal distances; forming droves, on their arrival, of about three hundred each. The first and second years, so unacquainted were these poor brutes with the use of this man's house or with his nature, that in a few hours they *rubbed* the house completely down; taking delight in turning the logs off with

their horns, while he had some difficulty to escape from being trampled under their feet, or crushed to death in his own ruins. At that period he supposed there could not have been less than ten thousand in the neighbourhood of the spring. They sought for no manner of food: but only bathed and drank three or four times a day, and rolled in the earth; or reposed, with their flanks distended, in the adjacent shades: and on the fifth and sixth days separated into distinct droves, bathed, drank, and departed in single files, according to the exact order of their arrival. They all rolled successively in the same hole: and each thus carried away a coat of mud, to preserve the moisture on their skin; and which, when hardened and baked by the sun, would resist the stings of millions of insects that otherwise would persecute these peaceful travellers to madness or even death.

In the first and second years this old man with some companions killed from six to seven hundred of these noble creatures, merely for the sake of the skins, which to them were worth only two shillings each: and after this "work of death," they were obliged to leave the place till the following season; or till the wolves, bears, panthers, eagles, rooks, ravens, &c. had devoured the carcases, and abandoned the place for other prey. In the two following years, the same persons killed great numbers out of the first droves that arrived, skinned them, and left the bodies exposed to the sun and air: but they soon had reason to repent of this; for the remaining droves, as they came up in succession, stopped, gazed on the mangled and putrid bodies, sorrowfully moaned or furiously lowed aloud, and returned instantly to the wilderness in an unusual run, without tasting their favourite spring, or licking

the impregnated earth, which was also once their most agreeable occupation: nor did they, or any of their race, ever revisit the neighbourhood.

The simple history of this spring, is that of every other in the settled parts of this western world: the carnage of beasts was every where the same. I met with a man who had killed two thousand buffaloes with his own hand; and others, no doubt, have done the same. In consequence of such proceedings, not one buffalo is at this time to be found east of the Mississippi; except a few domesticated by the curious, or carried through the country as a public shew. The first settlers, not content with this sanguinary extermination of the animal, also destroyed the food to which it was most partial; which was cane, growing in forests and brakes of immeasurable extent. To this the unsparing wretches set fire in dry seasons;

in order to drive out every living creature, and then hunt and persecute them to death.

Deer, which also abounded in this country, have nearly shared the same fate as the buffaloes; and they too would be entirely annihilated, if they were not capable of subsisting in places almost inaccessible to man. The small number that remain, frequent the mountains: their desire for the water of the saline springs however, occasionally brings them into the plains, where they do not want for enemies; there being no settler who would not abandon the most important business, in order to pursue this species of game. What was formerly common to all in consequence of the multitude of herds daily passing backward and forward, can now only gratify a few; for they esteem the death of this fine animal a triumph, and neglect no opportunity of thus distinguishing them-

selves over their associates. On killing a deer, he is immediately skinned, even while yet palpitating; nor are the bowels taken out, lest the hide should shrink. The haunches alone are valued as food: the rest is either given to the dogs, or left for beasts of prey or vermin, which every where abound.

The salt lake and springs are also frequented by all the other kinds of beasts, and even by birds: and from the most minute inquiries, I am justified in asserting that their visitations were periodical; except doves, which appear to delight in the neighbourhood of impregnated springs, and to make them their constant abode. In such situations they are seen in immense numbers, as tame as domestic pigeons, but rendered more interesting by their solitary notes and plaintive melody.

In descending the river, and traversing immense tracts of meadow

and woodlands which are in a state of nature, I have found the atmosphere, after a hot day, so mephitic and offensive, as to give me vomitings and headaches, which undoubtedly would have terminated in a yellow or intermittent fever if I had not previously fortified my blood with bark and other preventives. I recommend the same precaution to every person visiting this part of the world, and also to avoid studiously the night air. I have been wet with a dew so strong and palpable as to feel its effects for several days, in a general chill through my body, and a pain through particular bones. Yet in consequence of the violent heat of the day, people frequently defer their journeys and most of their pleasures, till the night; but a sad experience exposes the danger of the practice, in the strong language of rheumatism, consumption, and mental debility and distress.

You will ask me perhaps what parts of the country in the neighbourhood of the rivers which I have described, are likely to secure the blessings of health. I answer at once, though in direct contradiction to various writers, that no part of the western country is healthy; and I have already detailed my motives for this assertion. For if the air is impregnated (as is undoubtedly the case) with a poisonous exhalation so offensive to the constitution of the brute creation as to compel them to migrate several hundred miles annually in search of an antidote (which I conclude to be the real cause of their visits to the salt lake and springs), what must be its operation on man: whose organization is much more feeble; and whose blood, from the manner of his subsistence, is more subject to be polluted by the climate, and the various other elements of disease!

I allow that there are situations less

dangerous than others; for hills and eminences are evidently more favourable than plains and valleys: yet the Americans universally build in valleys, and on *bottoms* as they call them; which latter are plains formed by subsiding waters and from putrid ingredients, and subject to occasional overflows and partial stagnation. But this too can be accounted for: the borders of rivers and navigable streams are the theatres of business; and the Americans are too indolent to live on the high grounds, and to have the trouble of descending daily for the purpose of pursuing their avocations. They every moment see the consequences of this conduct; they see their friends fall off, their wives and children languish, and their own constitutions fail: still they persist; and prefer inactivity and disease to health and comfort, when the latter are to be purchased by exertion.

Before I leave the subject of these

two rivers, I must give you some few particulars of the manner in which their commerce is conducted.

I do not conceive that I assert too much, though it may be surprising to you, in saying, that the entire business of these waters is conducted without the use of money. I have already enumerated the produce; consisting chiefly of flour, corn, salt, cyder, apples, live hogs, bacon, glass, earthenware, &c. I have also mentioned the little towns and settlements along them. To such places persons come from Baltimore and Philadelphia with British goods, which they exchange for the above productions; charging on their articles at least 300 *per cent.*, and allowing the farmer and manufacturer but very low terms for theirs. Some of these prices are as follows: whiskey, two shillings a gallon; live hogs, two dollars and a half a hundredweight; bacon, three dollars a

hundredweight; flour, three dollars a barrel; corn, a quarter-dollar a bushel; butter, an eighth of a dollar a pound; cyder, four dollars a barrel; native sugar, a sixteenth of a dollar a pound; and so on in proportion, for any other produce of the country. The storekeepers make two annual collections of these commodities; send them down the rivers to New Orleans; and there receive an immense profit in Spanish dollars, or bills on Philadelphia at a short date. They then purchase British and West Indian goods of all kinds; send them by waggons, over the mountains, to their stores in the western country, where they always keep clerks; and again make their distributions and collections; descend the waters; and return by the same circuitous mountainous route, of at least 5650 miles, as nearly as can be calculated on an average between the

extreme head of the waters and Pittsburg, thus:

	Miles.
From each station to New Orleans - -	2300
From New Orleans to Philadelphia by sea	3000
From Philadelphia back to each station, by the way of the Alleghany mountains	350
Total	5650

A few, on receiving their cash at New Orleans, return by land through the wilderness, Tennasee, and Kentuckey, to their stations at and above Pittsburg; but this is seldom done. The distance which is thus performed is only 1300 miles.

These storekeepers are obliged to keep every article which it is possible that the farmer and manufacturer may want. Each of their shops exhibits a complete medley: a magazine where are to be had both a needle and an anchor, a tin pot and a large copper boiler, a child's whistle and a piano-

forte, a ring-dial and a clock, a skain of thread and trimmings of lace, a check frock and a muslin gown, a frieze coat and a superfine cloth, a glass of whiskey and a barrel of brandy, a gill of vinegar and a hogshead of Madeira wine, &c. Hence you will perceive that money is not always necessary as a circulating medium: however, as farmers and manufacturers advance in business, and find their produce more than equal to the wants of their families, they contract with the storekeeper to receive the annual balance of the latter either in cash, or in land to an equal amount; for though no person cultivates a tenth part of the land that he possesses, every one is animated with the rage of making further accessions. Thus the great landholders ultimately absorb all the hard money; and as they principally reside in the large towns in the Atlantic States, the money finds its way back to

those, and leaves many places here without a single dollar. This is productive of distressing incidents to small farmers who supply the markets with provisions: for whatever they have to sell, whether trivial or important, they receive in return nothing but an order on a store for the value in goods; and as the wants of such persons are few, they seldom know what articles to take. The storekeepers turn this circumstance to advantage, and frequently force on the customer a thing for which he has no use; or, what is worse, when the order is trifling, tell him to sit down at the door and drink the amount if he chooses. As this is often complied with, a market-day is mostly a scene of drunkenness and contention, fraud, cunning, and duplicity; the storekeeper denying the possession of a good article, till he fails in imposing a bad one. I have known a person ask for a pair of shoes, and

receive for answer that there were no shoes in the store, but some *capital gin* that could be recommended to him. I have heard another ask for a rifle-gun, and be answered that there were no rifles, but that he could be accommodated with the best *Dutch looking-glasses* and *German flutes* in the western country. Another was directed by his wife to bring her a warming-pan, smoothing-irons, and scrubbing-brushes: but these were denied; and a *wooden cuckoo-clock*, which the children would not take a week to demolish, was sent home in their stead. I could not help smiling at these absurdities, though I believe they deserve the name of impositions, till an incident reduced me to the condition of those whom I have just described. I rode an excellent horse to the head of the waters; and finding him of no further use from my having to take boat there, I proposed selling him to the best bid-

der. I was offered in exchange for him salt, flour, hogs, land, cast-iron salt-pans, Indian corn, whiskey,—in short every thing but what I wanted, which was money. The highest offer made, was cast-iron salt-pans to the amount of a hundred and thirty dollars. I asked the proprietor of this heavy commodity, how much cash he would allow me instead of such an incumbrance: his answer was, without any shame or hesitation, *forty dollars* at most. I preferred the pans; though they are to be exchanged again for glass bottles at Pittsburg, become tobacco or hemp in Kentuckey, and dollars in New Orleans. These various commercial processes may occupy twelve months; nor am I then certain of the amount, unless I give 30 *per cent.* to secure it.

The words *buy* and *sell* are nearly unknown here: in business nothing is heard but the word *trade*. "Will you trade your watch, your gun, pistols,

horses? &c." means, "Will you change your watch, gun, &c. for corn, pigs, cattle, Indian meal? &c." But you must anticipate all this from the absence of money.

LETTER VII.

Traces of a general deluge. Other great natural phenomena, difficult to be accounted for. Peculiar wonders of the vegetable and of the fossil kingdom. List of native plants classed into medicinal, esculent, ornamental, and useful. Vegetable products of the earth. Important inquiries and suggestions concerning some of them. Abundance of vegetable and mineral productions here, which might be turned to great account if properly explored. American warriors:—statesmen, and debates in Congress:—divines, lawyers, physicians, and philosophers. Buffon's assertion correct, that both man and inferior animals degenerate in America.

Pittsburg, January, 1806.

BEFORE I leave this place, it may be interesting and profitable to take a gene-

ral survey of the face of the country, and to describe some of its primitive productions.

That Moses gave an account worthy of credit, of the primeval state of the globe, this part of the world fully demonstrates. It abounds in irresistible proofs of a general deluge, of a miraculous effusion of water from the clouds and from the great abyss: or such an effusion may possibly have originated from the great Southern Ocean; running, from interruptions, a south-east course, and driving every object before it to the north-west; where it deposited remains now entirely unknown, or appertaining to regions at a distance of several thousand miles. Whether we inspect the plains, penetrate the cavernous mountains, or climb their broken sides, the remnants of organized bodies are every where found, buried in the various strata which form the external surface of the

earth. Immense collections of shells lie scattered or sunk around, and some on elevations of fifteen thousand feet above the present level of the sea. Fishes are frequently found in the veins of slate, and all kinds of vegetable impressions occur at heights and depths equally astonishing. Trees of different sorts, and various plants, are found in the greatest depths or on the loftiest mountains, mixed with marine remains. Trees have also been deposited on the summits of mountains, where, from the degree of cold which prevails there, they could not now possibly grow; therefore they must either have grown there at a time when the temperature of these summits was warmer by being less elevated above the sea, or have been deposited there by its inundations. It appears by the general face of the country, that the retreat of the sea was gradual. Large plains of different and successive elevations, a uni-

formity and regularity in the strata, and a variety of other circumstances, indicate the departure of the waters to have been governed by a cause whose action was regular, uniform, and long continued. Hence numerous objects which are now viewed as curious exotics, might have been indigenous at the period of a milder clime. This idea is justified by our knowledge of the effects of elementary conflicts in other situations. The country near Ararat is now unfit to bear the olive-tree, as it did* when the Caspian and Euxine seas were joined; the soil having been since chilled by its distance from the sea, and having suffered from the absence of matter with which it was accustomed to be impregnated.

Independantly of the appearance given to this portion of the globe, by the progress of the invasion of the waters from the great abyss, and their subse-

* Genesis, chap. 8, verse 11.

quent retreat, it presents features which must have been the result of causes difficult to be accounted for. These features manifest themselves in the extraordinary character and form of the mountains: in the beds of the rivers, which are not excavated by the constant flow of their water, but seem rent asunder (as it were) to give them instant passage: and by other phenomena which must have proceeded from violent earthquakes; igneous fusion; or elementary fire (the principle of heat coeval with the creation of matter) acting upon metals, sulphur, carbonic and bituminous substances, and thus occasioning vast eruptions which split the face of the earth, and gave it eccentric and new characters. Huge rocks cast from off the summits of hills, make room for lakes; entire ridges of stony mountain separate, and yield a passage to the pressing floods; immense caverns resound be-

neath the feet; and Nature, in disorder, chaos, and confusion, seems pleased to exhibit stupendous monuments of her power, the principles of which she has endowed us with faculties to comprehend.

This country, in consequence of its high antiquity, the immensity of its mountains, and the impossibility of its being affected by the violation and ravages of man, presents a field extremely favourable for the investigations of philosophy and the discoveries of truth. Here, free from any artificial garment, Nature is exhibited in her primitive state. The first productions of the earth were probably the winter mosses: they are here in such variety of form, that they hardly yield to herbs in number; and though extremely minute, yet of so admirable a structure that nothing can excel them in beauty or variety. These mosses are dried up in summer; but in

winter revive, and serve for the food of deer and other animals. The widely disseminated herbs, flowers, and fruits, also decorate the earth in the most charming manner. Trees grow here to an excessive magnitude; and by weaving their branches together, defend the ground from excessive heat and cold, and afford shelter to animals against the injuries of the weather. The hills, vales, and caverns, also supply numerous subjects for contemplation. There may be seen the laborious and unremitted *industry* of the fossil kingdom: the manner in which water deposits clay; how it is crystalized into sand near the shore; how it wears down shells and other substances into chalk, dead plants into vegetable mould, and metals into ochre; from all which matter, according to certain laws of nature, stones are formed. Thus from sand originates whetstone; from mould,

slate; from chalk, flint; from shells and earth, marble; and from clay, talc. In the cavities of these are formed concrete pellucid crystals; which, consisting of various sides opposed to each other, compose a number of regular figures, and emit brilliant and prismatic colours. Here also may be, *in formation*, ponderous and shining metals: iron in abundance; some lead; silver; and even the ductile gold, which eludes the violence of fire, and can be extended in length and breadth to a most astonishing degree. It is said that the magnet too has been found here; the magnet, respecting which no mortal has hitherto been able to learn the secret law of its mutual attraction with iron, or of its constant inclination to the poles. None of these metals however, except iron, are found in such quantity, or are so common, as to be worth the labour of search; but mineral coal abounds so

generally, that an opinion prevails that the whole tract between the Laurel-mountain, Mississippi, and Ohio, would yield it in the greatest plenty. The mountain immediately opposite to this town is principally composed of coal, from the base to the summit. It is worked with little comparative trouble, about half-way up; and rolled down to boats which lie below for its reception. It is of a very superior quality, and costs the citizens about two-pence halfpenny a bushel.

As I do not conceive it interesting to you to receive a complete catalogue of trees, plants, fruit, &c. I shall only sketch out those which principally attract notice, as being, 1. Medicinal; 2. Esculent; 3. Ornamental; 4. Useful: adding (from Mr. Jefferson's list) the Linnean to the popular name. I confine myself to native plants.

MEDICINAL.

Popular name.	*Linnean name.*
Senna.	Cassia Ligustrina.
Arsmart.	Polygonum Sagittarum.
Clivers, or Goose-grass.	Galium Spurium.
Lobelia, several sorts.	———
Palma Christi.	Racinus.
James's Town Weed.	Datura Stramonium.
Mallow.	Malva Rotundifolia.
Syrian Mallow.	Hibiscus Moschentos.
———	Hibiscus Virginicus.
Indian Mallow.	Sida Rhombifolia.
———	Sida Abutilon.
Virginia Marshmallow.	Napæa Hermaphrodita.
———	Napæa Dioica.
Indian Physic.	Spiræa Trifoliata.
Euphorbia Ipecacuanha.	———
Pleurisy Root.	Asclepias Decumbens.
Virginia Snake Root.	Actæa Racemosa.
Seneca Rattle-snake Rt.	Polygala Senega.
Valerian.	Valeriana locusta radiata.
Gentian.	Gentiana, Saponaria, Vellosa, et Centaurium.
Ginseng.	Panax Quinquefolium.
Angelica.	Angelica Sylvestris.
Columbo Root.	———
Tobacco.	Nicotiana.

ESCULENT.

Tuckahoe.	Lycaperdon Tuber.
Jerusalem Artichoke.	Hebanthus Tuberosus.
Long Potatoes.	Convolvulas Batatas.
Granadellas.	Passiflora Incarrata.
Panic.	Panicum, many species.
Indian Millet.	Holcus Laxus.
Wild Oat.	Zizania Aqutica.
Wild Pea.	Dolichos of Clayton.
Lupine.	Lupinus Perennis.
Wild Hop.	Humulus Lupulus.
Wild Cherry.	Prunus Virginiana.
Cherokee Plumb.	Prunus Sylvestris fructu majori.
Wild Plumb.	Prunus Sylvestris fructu minori.
Wild Crab Apple.	Pyrus Coronaria.
Red Mulberry.	Morus Rubra.
Persimmon.	Diospyros Virginiana.
Sugar Maple.	Acer Saccharinum
Scaly-bark Hickory.	Juglans Alba cortice Lyumoso. C.
Common Hickory.	Juglans Alba, fructu minore rancedo. C.
Paccan, or Illenois Nut.	Unknown to Linnæus.
Black Walnut.	Juglans Nigra.
White Walnut.	Juglans Alba.
Chesnut.	Fagus Castanea.

Chinquapin.	Fagus Pumila.
Hazel Nut.	Corylus Avellana.
Grapes.	Vitis. various sorts.
Scarlet Strawberries.	Fragaria Virginiana.
Whortleberries.	Vaccenеum Uliginosum.
Wild Gooseberries.	Ribes Grossularia.
Cranberries.	Rubus Oxycoecos.
Black Raspberries.	Rubus Occidentalis.
Blackberries.	Rubus Fruticosus.
Dewberries.	Rubus Cæsius.
Cloud-berries.	Rubus Chamæmorus.
Maize.	Trea Mays.
Round Potatoes.	Solanum Tuberosum.
Pumpkins.	Cucurbita Pepo.
Cymlings.	Cucurbita Verrucosa.
Squashes.	Cucurbita Melopepo.

ORNAMENTAL.

Plane Tree.	Platanus Occidentalis.
Poplar.	Lerisdendron Tulipifera.
Black Poplar.	Populus Nigra.
Yellow Poplar.	
Aspin.	Populus Tremula.
Linden, or Lime.	Tilia Americana.
Red flowering Maple.	Acer Rubrum.
Horse Chesnut.	Æsculus Pavia.
Catalpa.	Bignonia Catalpa.

Umbrella.	Magnolia Tripetala.
Swamp Laurel.	Magnolia Glauca.
Cucumber Tree.	Magnolia Acuminata.
Portugal Bay.	Laurus Indica.
Red Bay.	Laurus Barbonia.
Dwarf-rose Bay.	Rhododendron Maximum.
Laurel of the western country.	Many species.
Wild Pimento.	Lurus Benzoin.
Sassafras.	Laurus Sassafras.
Locust.	Robinia Spuedo-acacia.
Honey-locust.	Gleditsia.
Dagwood.	Cornus Florida.
Snow Drop.	Chionanthus Virginica.
Barberry.	Buberis Vulgaris.
Red Bud, or Judas Tree	Cercis Canadensis.
Holly.	Ilex Aquifolium.
Cockspur Hawthorn.	Cratægus Coccenea.
Spindle Tree.	Euonimus Europaus.
Evergreen Tree.	Euonimus Americanus.
————————	Itea Virginica.
Elder.	Sambucus Nigra.
Papaw.	Annona Triloba.
Candleberry Myrtle.	Myrica Cerifera.
Dwarf Laurel.	Kalmia Angustifolia.
Ivy.	Hedera Quinquefolia.
Trumpet Honeysuckle.	Lonicera Sempervirens.
Upright Honeysuckle.	Azalia Nudiflora.

Yellow Jasmine.	Begnonea Sempervirens.
	Calythanthus Floridus.
American Aloe.	Agave Virginica.
Sumach.	Rhus. many species.
Poke.	Phytoloca Decandra.
Long Moss.	Tellandsia Usneoides.

USEFUL, for fabrication.

Reed.	Arundo Phoagmitis.
Virginia Hemp.	Acneda Cannabina.
Flax.	Lenum Virgineanum.
Black, or Pitch Pine.	Pinus Tæda.
White Pine.	Pinus Strobus.
Yellow Pine.	Pinus Virginica.
Spruce Pine.	Pinus Foliis Singularibus. C.
Hemlock Spruce Fir.	Pinus Canadensis.
Arbor Vitæ.	Thuya Occidentalis.
Juniper.	Juniperus Virginica.
Cypress.	Cupussus Disticha.
White Cedar.	Cupussus Thyoides.
Red Cedar.	
Black Oak.	Quercus Nigra.
White Oak.	Quercus Alba.
Red Oak.	Quercus Rubra.
Willow Oak.	Quercus Phellos.

Chesnut Oak.	Quercus Prinus.
Black Jack Oak.	Quercus Aquatica.
Ground Oak.	Quercus Pumila.
Live Oak.	Quercus Virginiana.
Black Birch.	Betula Nigra.
White Birch.	Betula Alba.
Beach.	Fagus Sylvatica.
Ash. several species.	Fraxinus Americana.
Elm.	Ulmus Americana.
Willow. several species.	Salix.
Sweet Gum.	LiquidambarStyracifera.

There are numerous plants, flowers, &c. which I have omitted: you will find a scientific account of them in the Flora Virginica of the celebrated Dr. Clayton, published at Leyden, in 1762.

After this enumeration it is unnecessary to tell you that the farms of the country produce wheat, rye, barley, oats, buck-wheat, broom-corn, Indian corn, &c. This neighbourhood also cultivates hemp, flax, and hops; but

is not favourable to cotton, indigo, rice, or tobacco. Those articles however are to be had down the Ohio, and are brought hither at an expence of about two-pence *per* pound. All kinds of vegetables and fruit grow in great luxuriance: the former especially are superior to those of Europe; but in consequence of the high price of labour, and the little attention paid to so interesting a branch of rural economy, they are not quite so cheap.

Much has been written and said respecting the arrack-tree: may it not be the same as the American cocoa; or perhaps rather the sugar-maple; which for many years successively yields a large quantity of rich sweet sap, whence a fine sugar is made and spirit is distilled? It also might be worth inquiry whether the cotton of the country, which is different from that raised in the islands, be not the same as that of which the Chinese make

their fine calicoes and muslins. It might be ascertained whether the common Indian hemp be not the same as the Chinese herba; and whether the silk gathered on the trees in China, be any other than than the cocoons which are to be found in great plenty in many situations here on trees and bushes. The manufactured silk of the Chinese appears to be of different sorts, from which it is likely that they have different species of silk-worms. In this country, more to the southward, various sorts of cocoons are found on trees and shrubs, but those on the mulberry are the best: the cocoons of some of them, particularly such as feed on the sassafras, are large; and the substance which they produce, though not so fine, is much stronger than that of the Italian silk-worm. Thus in my opinion there is reason to believe, that if experiments were made with these indigenous silk-worms, and if such as are most useful

were propagated, this country might produce abundance of silk.

Here are also many trees, plants, roots, and herbs, to the medicinal virtues and uses of which we are total strangers. It is perhaps true that the fruit of the presemmon tree has been used in brewing of beer; but it is hardly known that one bushel of this fruit will yield above a gallon of proof spirit, of excellent quality and flavour. To what other uses in pharmacy the gum, bark, and roots of this tree, which are very astringent, may be applied, the public is also ignorant. The virtues of the magnolia, calalpa, and spice-wood, whose odours extend several miles, are not sufficiently ascertained, though they have been used by the Indians who consider them as excellent remedies in several disorders. There is another tree called the zanthoxelum, the bark of which is of such a peculiar quality, that the smallest bit of

it, on being chewed, stimulates the glands of the mouth and tongue and occasions a flow of saliva equal to that of a salivation, while its action continues, and yet no rational experiments have been made to ascertain the advantages to be derived from such extraordinary properties. A variety of other trees might be mentioned, such as the sassafras; the wild cinnamon; the magnolia altissima; whose fragrant smell and aromatic taste prove that they possess medicinal qualities with which we are unacquainted. The shumack likewise requires examination. Perhaps its seed or berries, if not the wood itself, might be used in dying. The Indians mix its leaves with their tobacco to render it odorific and pleasant in smoking. There is a species of it which yields a gum, that nearly, if not exactly, resembles the gum copal. Indeed there is reason to believe it is the very same.

Wines and raisins are imported from foreign parts at an extravagant price, while nature points out that few countries can be more proper than this for the production of the grape.—Where lands are not cleared and the grape-vines not extirpated, it is impossible to resist observing and admiring the quantity which those natural vineyards present to the view. Farther down the Ohio, in the Indian territory and elsewhere, hills, vales, and plains, exhibit them in luxurious abundance. They grow spontaneously in every soil, and almost every climate in America; yet they are neglected or unskillfully encouraged on a small scale.

It would be endless to recount all the other articles of the vegetable kingdom which are not investigated, though, with a little care and attention, they might become articles of commerce, and be of infinite use to the country. I must men-

tion one plant, a native of this place, and which grows in many places, known commonly by the name of Indian hemp. Its bark is so strong that the Indians make use of it for bow-strings. Could a method be found for separating and softening its fibres, so as to render it ductile and fit to be spun into thread, it might serve as a substitute for flax and hemp. This plant deserves to be cultivated on another account: the pod it bears contains a substance, that, from its softness and elasticity, might be used instead of the finest down. Its culture is easy, in as much as its root, which penetrates deep into the earth, survives the winter, and shoots out fresh stalks every spring. With the roots of plants, nearly unknown to us, the Indians stain wood, hair, and skins, of a beautiful colour, and which preserves its lustre for years, though exposed to all extremes of the weather. With the juice of herbs they relieve many

diseases, heal wounds, and cure the bite of the most venemous snakes. A perfect knowledge of these simples, and of many others with which this country abounds, might be of great utility to mankind. Perhaps they are in as great abundance here as in China. The resemblance is manifest in the weather, the climate, and possibly in the soil and produce. Tobacco, phitolacca, the presemmon tree, the mulberry, with several others, are natives of China as they are also of most parts of America. Ginseng is gathered to the westward of Pekin, and has not been found in any other part of the world, except within the same degrees of latitude in this country, where ship-loads may be had at a short notice. These observations give grounds to believe that, if proper inquiries were made, many more of the native plants of China, and, very possibly, the tea, so much in use, and now

become so necessary a part of diet, might be found in America.

Nor are the bowels of the earth sufficiently explored, notwithstanding the great encouragement received from the few experiments which have been made. There is here a great variety of clays, many of them so valuable as to induce a hope that, in time, porcelain, equal to that brought from China, may be manufactured at home. The lands to the S. W. are so replete with nitre that, in various places, it appears like a hoar frost on the surface of the ground, and it is known that there are mines of saltpetre in the mountains. Besides the minerals I have mentioned, I have seen specimens of tin, antimony, besmuth ores, and many others, the nature, use, and properties of which are not sufficiently ascertained. What you have heard of the country originates from the narratives of hunters, the reports of ig-

norant travellers, and the dreams of persons who never left their native homes. Whereas it richly merits, that a society of learned naturalists should visit it, under the patronage of government, explore with care, analyze with skill, and return enriched with useful knowledge and profitable erudition, derived from the great book of nature, and not from uncertain information, or false hypotheses.

From these remarks concerning the riches yielded by its soil, I shall make rather an abrupt transition to what should rank as the far nobler produce of America, its inhabitants: I now speak only of its civilized parts, the United States; but on this subject, alas! it may be said with the greatest truth:

"Man is the only growth that dwindles here."

You may perhaps have heard so much of great American warriors, states-

men, politicians, churchmen, lawyers, physicians, astronomers, &c. that you are astonished to hear any one bold enough to dispute the fact. I say the fact, because in my correspondence with you, you may have already perceived my determination of making no general assertion but such as I can establish by actual evidence and decisive testimonies. I know of no great warriors in America. I cannot honor by that name even the men who overwhelmed a handful of british, and after several years combat obtained an unprofitable victory. In like manner I have known a shoal of herrings run down a whale on the coast of Cornwall, but it did not follow that I was to attribute this accident to the *individual prowess* of *any* of such contemptible animals, or to the absence of strength and capacity in the whale. This is so just a picture of the American war and its close, that

I hasten to the statemen of whom your papers speak so much: and who are they? I admit there are two in the country; the one after many years of public life devoted to a democratic party had the good sense again to become an apostate to monarchy, though he might have predicted that it would occasion his fall from the head of the government, and expose him to the most intemperate abuse of the jacobinical faction. He met these events soon after with a manly fortitude, and Mr. John Adams, now leads a private life, beloved by the admirers of good sense, and sound and practical political economy. There is no doubt but that he is the first statesman in America, for I trust you do not mean me to distinguish by that name the swarm of politicians who clog the wheels of the government, and who affect that they alone are competent to the direction of national affairs. The

next stateman to Mr. Adams, is Mr. Jefferson. This gentleman has more theoretical talent than sterling political ability. And yet, to shew some respect to the cry of the world, I call him a statesman, though he certainly has betrayed more derelection and tergiversation than ought to be accorded to so high and eminent a name. During the whole of his two precidencies he has been fluctuating between the interests of his country and his prejudice and attachment to the French government. The remains of good sense and the *loud* admonitions of others, have at length prevailed, and though he continues his affection to the Gallic cock, still he ceases to hate and bully the British lion. There are in America no real politicians; the speeches you see in papers are made by Irish and Scotch journalists, who attend the congress and senate merely to take the spirit of their pro-

ceedings and clothe it with a language interesting to read. Attending the debates of Congress on a day when a subject of consequence was to be discussed, I left the house full of contempt of its eloquence and the paucity of talent employed for the support or condemnation of the question. Notwithstanding this I read in the next morning's gazette, " that a debate took place in the house last night of the most interesting nature; that it was agitated by all the talent in the country,—particularly by Messieurs Dayton, Morgan, Otty, Dawson, and whose brilliant speeches we lay before the public." Here followed certainly eloquent orations, a sentence of which never passed in the house. I had the misfortune to attend the Congress at another time, when the scene was more noisy and turbulent than at any of your electioneering hustings.—A Mr. Lyon, of

Vermont, now of Kentuckey, not being able to disprove the arguments of an opponent, spit directly in his face: this the other resented by running to the fire and catching up a hot poker, and in a short time nearly killed his opponent, and cleared the house. I suppose this is sufficient on this head; from it you can readily learn that the Congress is a violent vulgar assembly, which *hired* persons attend, to debate on state affairs, and that the public newspapers are conducted by foreign editors, who amplify such debates, and give them something of a polished and interesting character.

Nor has the church any brighter ornaments than the state. The members of it have no conception of eloquence. Mr. Smith, of Prince Tower College, has the highest reputation as a divine and orator. I went to hear him preach, and had the mortification to find a transposed sermon of Blair, delivered in a strain of dull monotony.

As the exposition of all law, and pleading of all facts is confined to the province of attornies, I was not surprised to find a want of ability and eloquence in that department. The late general Hamilton, a West-Indian by birth, was the first attorney, and pleaded in America. The celebrated Mr. Burr, was his rival at the bar; and since the death of the former, and retreat of the latter, a Mr. Livingstone and a Mr. Emmet, alone enjoy repute.

The physicians of eminence are very few. Dr. Rush, of Philadelphia, and Wilson, of New York, monopolize all the character in the country, of a medical nature; and yet the yellow fever rages and carries off their annual thousands, though these gentlemen have written themselves into the name of infallibility itself. There is no profession in America, so shamefully neglected as that of physic, or more destitute of able practitioners.

As to the department of science, I am told that there has been a Franklin and a Rittenhouse; the former shone in electricity, and the latter constructed an orrery on true principles. I will allow this; I have no disposition to retract from the merits of such gentlemen, but I cannot admit that these two instances, after the mediocrity of genius, are sufficient to justify Mr. Jefferson, in saying that America is the most *enlightened country in the world*, and that M. Buffon was guilty of a gross error when he asserted that man and beast degenerated in America, and became in time, inferior to those of Europe. M. Buffon, was perfectly right in his assertion and principle, but wrong in the proof he adduced. Mr. Jefferson took advantage of this error; all his followers have taken his ground, and nothing is heard through the whole union, but " America is the most enlightened nation in the

world." This cry has spread abroad; is believed at home, and M. Buffon is condemned. This is the natural fate of flattery and truth—Mr. Jefferson is held up as a great statesman and profound philosopher, while M. Buffon, is held in contempt as a prejudiced reasoner, jealous of the pride and honor of the quarter of the globe, which gave the former birth! The reflections likely to arise in your mind out of this, I shall not interrupt.

LETTER VIII.

General view of the river Ohio, and its beauties —its advantages—its course—its islands—its depth and navigation—its obstructions might easily be removed.—Advice to persons wishing to descend the Ohio.

Wheeling, Virginia, on the Ohio.
April, 1806.

YOU will perceive, much to your satisfaction, that I have left Pittsburg whence I sent you so many tedious letters, and am about to descend the Ohio. —Before however I commence that river's minute details, I must give you its general description.

The Ohio commences at the junction of the Alleghany and Monongahela rivers, and there also commences its beauty. It has been truly described as beyond competition, the most beautiful river in the universe, whether it be considered for its meandering course through an immense region of forests; for its elegant banks, which afford innumerable delightful situations for cities, villages, and improved farms; or for those many other advantages which truly entitle it to the name originally given it by the French, of "*La belle riviere.*" This is the outline of a description given several years since, and it has generally been thought an exaggerated one. Now, the immense forests recede, cultivation smiles along its banks; numerous villages and towns decorate its shores; and it is not extravagant to suppose, that the day is not far distant when its whole margin will form one continued series of villages and towns.

The reasons for this gratifying supposition are many: the principal ones are, the immense tracts of fine country that have communication with the Ohio by means of its tributary navigable waters; the extraordinary fertility, extent, and beauty of the river-bottoms, generally high, dry, and productive; and the superior excellence of its navigation, through means of which the various productions of the most extensive and fertile parts of the United States must eventually be sent to market.

At its commencement at Pittsburg, it takes a north-west course for about twenty-five miles, then turns gradually to west-south-west, and pursuing that course for about five hundred miles, winds to the south-west for nearly one hundred and sixty miles; then turns to the west for about two hundred and sixty miles; thence south-west for one hundred and sixty, and empties into the Mississippi in a south-east direction, about eleven hundred miles

below Pittsburg, and nearly the same distance above New Orleans in lat. 36° 43^{m} north.—It is so completely serpentine, that in several places a person taking observations of the sun or stars, will find that he sometimes entirely changes his direction, and appears to be going directly back; but its general course is south, sixty degrees west. Its width is from five hundred to fifteen hundred yards; but at the *rapids*, and near the mouth, it is considerably wider.

The numerous islands that are interspersed in this river, add much to the grandeur of its appearance, but they very much embarrass the navigation, particularly in low water, as they occasion a great many shoals and sand-bars. The soil of those islands is, for the most part, very rich, the timber luxuriant, and the extent of some of them considerable. Where fruit trees have been planted, they are found to thrive, to bear well,

and seldom fail of a crop. Indeed this is the case wherever fruit trees have been tried on the river bottoms, the soil of which is very similar to that of the islands, though not quite so sandy.

In times of high freshes, and during the effusion of ice and snow from the Alleghany and other mountains, vessels of almost any tonnage may descend; and it is never so low but that it may be navigated by canoes and other light craft, not drawing more than twelve inches water. The highest floods are in spring, when the river rises forty-five feet; the lowest are in summer, when it sinks to twelve inches on the bars, ripples, and shoals where waggons, carts, &c. frequently pass. Many of the impediments however which are to be met with when the water is low, might in a dry time be got rid of, and at no very considerable expence: at least the expence would be by no means beyond the advantages

which would accrue from the undertaking if properly managed.—Rocks, that now during the dry season, obstruct or render dangerous the large flat bottomed, or what are called Kentuckey boats, might be blasted; channels might be made through the ripples; and the snags, and fallen timber along the banks entirely removed.

These improvements, together with many others that might be enumerated, must undoubtedly, sooner or later, be carried into effect, as they are a national concern of the first importance. In the mean time, some general instructions respecting the present navigation, and which I have collected from the most experienced watermen, will be found useful to those who may hereafter propose descending the river, and who are unacquainted both as to the manner this voyage is to be undertaken, and with the nature and channel of the different

rivers. Do not let it be said notwithstanding, that I mean to encourage any person to follow my steps or to reside on these waters. I repeat, that the *parts* of the river's banks, *favorable* for towns, villages, farms, &c. are without exception, unhealthy—exposing all descriptions of inhabitants, especially new comers, to annual visitations of dissentery, flux, pleuracy, and various species of intermittent fevers. This is to be expected of rivers which experience such extraordinary and great vicissitudes; at one period sufficient to carry a first rate man of war, and at another barely capable of floating a canoe; at one period running at seven miles an hour, and at another nearly stagnate in an unruffled bed.

The first thing to be attended to by emigrants, or traders, wishing to descend the river, is to procure a boat, to be ready so as to take advantage of the

times of flood, and to be careful that the boat be a good one: for many of the accidents that happen in navigating the Ohio and Mississippi, are owing to the unpardonable carelessness and penuriousness of the boat builder, who will frequently slight his work, or make it of injured plank; in either case putting the lives and properties of a great many persons to manifest hazard. This egregious misconduct should long before this time been rectified, by the appointment of a boat-inspector at different places on the Monongahela. But as this has never been done, it belongs to every person purchasing Kentuckey boats, which is the sort I allude to, to get them narrowly examined before the embarkation, by persons who may know a little of the strength and form of a boat suitable to a voyage of this kind. He must also remember this, that a boat destined for the Mississippi, re-

quires to be much stronger timbered, and somewhat differently constructed, from one designed only to descend the Ohio.

Flat bottomed boats may be procured almost every-where along the Monongahela river, and in some places on the Youghiogheny; very few are as yet built on the Alleghany, as the chief places of embarkation are confined to the Monongahela and Ohio. Keel-boats and vessels of burden are also built at Brownsville, Elizabeth's-town, and many other places on the two last mentioned rivers.

The best seasons for navigating the Ohio are spring and autumn. The spring season commences at the breaking up of the ice, which generally happens about the middle of February, and continues good for about three months. The autumn generally commences in October, and continues till about the

first of December, when the ice begins to form. But the alternations of high water can scarcely be called periodical, as they vary considerably, according to the wetness or dryness of the season, or earliness or lateness of the setting in, or breaking up of winter. The winter of 1802 was even an exception to every other, the Monongahela not having been closed at all with ice, so that there was nothing to impede the passage of boats into the Ohio, &c. This circumstance is the more extraordinary, the winters in general being very severe, some of which a few years past, kept the rivers blocked up for more than two months at a time. The cause of these sudden and great changes may usefully occupy the philosophic mind.

Nor are freshes in the rivers entirely confined to the spring and autumn: it does not unfrequently happen that a considerable quantity of rain falls in the

Apalachian ridges, whence the rivers and creeks that supply the Monongahela proceed, during the summer months; a swelling of the currents of the Alleghany and other rivers, sometimes also happens, and occasions a sufficient supply of water during the same period to render the navigation of the Ohio perfectly eligible. These rains, or freshes, however, are not to be depended on, and when they occur, must be taken immediate advantage of, as the waters subside rapidly.

When provided with a good boat and strong cable of at least forty feet long, there is little danger in descending the river in high freshes, using due precaution, unless at times when there is much floating ice. Great exertion with the oars is, at such times, generally speaking, of no manner of use: in fact, it is rather detrimental than otherwise, by often throwing the boat out of the

current in which she ought to continue, and which will carry her along with more rapidity, and at the same time always take her right. By trusting to the current there is no danger to be feared in passing the islands, as it will carry the boat by them in safety. On the other hand, if persons row, and by so doing happen to be in the middle of the river, on approaching an island, there is great danger of being thrown on the upper point of it before they are aware, or have time to regain the true current. In case they get aground in such a situation, become entangled among the aquatic timber, which is generally abundant, or be driven by the force of the water among the *tops* or trunks of other trees, they may consider themselves in imminent danger; and nothing but *presence of mind* and great exertion can extricate them from such a dilemma.

Persons should contrive to land as

seldom as possible: they need not even lie by at night, provided they trust to the current and keep a good look out. When they bring to, the strength of their cable is their principal safe-guard. A quantity of fuel, provisions, and other necessaries, should be laid in at once, and every boat should have a skiff or canoe along side, to land on shore when necessary.

Though the labour of navigating this river in times of fresh is very inconsiderable to what it is during low water, when continual rowing is necessary, it is always best to keep a good look out, and be strong handed. The winds sometimes drive boats too near the points of the islands, or on projecting parts of the main shore, when considerable extra exertion is necessary to surmount the difficulty. Boats most commonly meet with head winds, as the river is so very crooked, that what is in their favor one

hour will probably be against them in the next, and when a contrary wind contends with a strong current, it is attended with considerable inconvenience, and requires careful and circumspect management, otherwise the boats must be driven on shore in spite of all the efforts of their crews. One favorable circumstance is, that the wind commonly abates about sun-set in summer.

Boats have frequently passed from Pittsburgh to the mouth of the Ohio in fifteen days. However, twenty days is a good spring passage. In summer, six, eight, and even ten *weeks* are often required to effect the same voyage.

Descending the river when much incommoded with floating ice, should be as much as possible avoided, particularly early in the winter, as there is a great probability of its stopping the boats: however, if the water be high and there be an appearance of open weather, they

may venture, unless the cakes of ice be so heavy as to impede their progress, or injure their timbers;—the boats will in such case make more way than the ice, a great deal of which will sink, and get thinner as it progresses; but, on the other hand, if the water be low, it is by no means safe to embark on it when any thing considerable of ice remains.

If at any time boats are obliged to bring to on account of the ice, great circumspection should be used in the choice of a spot to lie in. There are many places where the shore, projecting to a point, throws off the flakes of ice towards the middle of the river, and forms a kind of harbour below. By bringing to in such a situation, and fixing the canoe above the boat, with one end strongly to the shore, and the other out in the stream, sloping down the river, so as to drive out such masses of ice as would otherwise accumulate on the upper side

of the boat, and tend to sink her and drive her from her moorings, a boat may lie with a tolerable degree of safety. This is a much better method than that of felling a tree on the shore above, so as to fall partly into the river: for if, in its fall, it does not adhere in some measure to the stump, or rest sufficiently on the bank, the weight of accumulated ice will be apt to send it adrift, and bring it down, ice and all, on the boat, when no safety can be expected from it; nor any means of extrication from so great a dilemma.—The reflection here naturally occurs, how easy it would be, and how little it would cost, in different places of the river where boats are accustomed to land, to project a sort of pier into the water, which inclining down the stream, would at all time insure a place of safety below it. The advantages accruing from such projections, to the places where they might be made, would be very consi-

derable, bring them into repute as landing places, and soon repay the trifling expence incurred by erection. There is however no hope that any improvement of this kind will take place at least for a number of years, as the inhabitants of the present settlements and towns, appear to have delighted in rendering their landing places difficult, by felling the timber on the banks into the river, and by not leaving as much as a shrub to which a boat can be made fast. The settlements themselves frequently suffer by this their shameful prodigality and want of foresight, as boats on making them, and not finding an immediate fastening and safe landing, drop below the settlements never again to return: for it would take a flat boat and forty hands ten days to make good five miles against the stream. You must understand from the stress I have laid on the necessity of a fastening on shore, and a good landing

place, that flat boats never carry an anchor. The method to run the boat ashore is, jump hastily out, and fasten a line or cable round a stump, tree, &c.; or hold on till a stake be cut and driven in the ground for the same purpose.

Observing the Ohio from Pittsburg, and remarking in the mind its general course, it is bounded on the *right-hand side* in this manner:

1st. Part of the state of Pennsylvania, extending about fifteen miles down the river.

2dly. The whole southern boundary of the Ohio state, formerly called the North-west Territory. This state extends along the river about five hundred miles.

3dly. The Indiana territory extends to the mouth of the Ohio, making five hundred and fifty miles more along its banks; which added to the two former numbers make the entire course about eleven hundred miles.

Observing the river under the same circumstances from Pittsburg, it is found to be bounded on the *left-hand*;—

1st. By part of the state of Pennsylvania, extending forty-two miles down the river.

2. By part of Virginia, extending two hundred and ninety-six miles along a high shore; and

3. By the state of Kentuckey which extends to the mouth seven hundred and sixty-two miles, and forms the entire distance of eleven hundred miles or thereabouts.

The recapitulation of this is, that the right-hand side of the Ohio is bound by Pennsylvania, the Ohio state, and the Indiana territory:—and these provinces, or their proper proportions of them, are bounded on the north by the lakes and by the British possessions in Canada; on the south of course by the Ohio river; on the west by the Mississippi; and on

the east by parts of Pennsylvania, Connecticut, and New York.

The *left-hand* side of the Ohio is bounded by Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Kentuckey; and these provinces, or their proper proportion, are bounded on the south by by the Carolinas, Georgia, and Tenessee; on the north of course by the Ohio river; on the west by the Mississippi; and on the east by the Atlantic seas.——On a map, these general boundaries would naturally have to undergo modifications, and be divided into particular bearings and points. By stating them as I have, I only mean to give you a general idea of them.—This great river contains near one hundred islands, and receives as many rivers, creeks, or navigable streams.

In my next I shall examine them step by step. That they may afford you information and amusement, is my most ardent step; but you must be patient,

and bear with my usual wide digression and extraneous matter.

LETTER IX.

Proper season to descend the Ohio—a Monongahela, or Kentuckey boat described—Confluence of the Monongahela and Alleghany waters—Sublime scenery—Hamilton's island—Irwin's island—difficulties in the course—Hogs' and Crows' islands—Macintosh's town—Warren's town—Young's town—Grape island—its inhabitants—cause and manner of their settlement—its grape-vines—George town—a spring producing an oil similar to Seneca oil—experiments to discover its cause—deductions from them.

Wheeling, Virginia, April, 1806.

I LEFT Pittsburgh just before the waters had entirely subsided. The winter broke up about the tenth of February, since which time, the flood has been seeking the sea with an unwearied assiduity. I might have taken advantage

of its first force, but I declare to you, fond as you may think me of diligence and enterprize, I have no fancy to be dragged by day down the river, by force, nor to bring to against the trunks and in the tops of trees, from night till morning: this is the fate of all those who depart on the immediate dissolution of the ice; on they must proceed, and often in spite of every exertion, or bring up in situations wild, dangerous, and inhospitable. Being conscious then of all the disagreeable circumstances attending those who hurry away with the earliest floods, I waited till this season when the waters run a little more than three miles an hour, allowing a boat, with small exertion, and not meeting a head wind to make between forty and fifty miles in a day of twelve hours.

This town which is ninety miles from Pittsburgh, I reached on the evening of the second day. The water in some

places was very shallow, and in others rocky and dangerous. But I believe I promised you to be minute: let me then make a compleat beginning. I purchased for forty dollars on the Monongahela a Kentuckey boat. I must describe such a thing to you, for it is no more like an English boat of any description than it is like a church. An oblong frame is first made perhaps forty feet long by sixteen wide. The four pieces forming this frame are generally from fourteen to eighteen inches square, mortised so as to receive a number of bars across, on which are fastened thick planks with wooden pins—this forming the flat bottom of the boat. From the solid beams of the frame rise several uprights six feet high, to which boards are attached to form the ends and sides; after which the boat is roofed over except a small space through which the hands can drop or enter. The whole

represents an oblong apartment—both ends perfectly square, and nothing indicates the bow but the small open space in the roof, and holes in the sides, through which the oars work. Boats of this sort are steered by a large oar ballanced on a pivot, issuing from the middle uprights of the stern. This is prefered to a tiller, which, by sinking too deep in the water, would risk being carried off by logs and shoals. I divided my boat into two apartments; that next the stern for my own accommodation; that next the head for my servants to cook, row, and keep a look out in: the roof served for the helmsman and as a quarter-deck, on which to parade. When I add to this, that I had a good chimney built in my boat; four windows made; that I laid in two coops-full of chickens, other kinds of stores, spirits, coffee, sugar, &c. I need not tell you how comfortable I set off,

and how able I was to endure the vicissitudes of my intended voyages. My servants were Mindeth, my old follower, and Cuff a mestee, of the Bandan nation; the former a strong laborious creature, the latter a fellow without any other character than that he knew something of the waters, was a good shot, and well acquainted with haunts of wild turkies, game, and beasts. I could have got another hand, for fifteen dollars a month, but as I was determined to steer myself and be active in other respects, I departed but with two men. I cannot recommend this temerity to others: four hands are always necessary, and sometimes more.

In turning into the stream from Pittsburgh I found the scene instantaneously changed, and become peculiarly grand. In ten minutes I got into the confluence of the Monongahela and Alleghany waters. For half an hour I steered my

boat in this confluence, being able to dip up whitish water on one side and perfectly green on the other. The hills on the right hand were near 1200 feet high—those on the left something less lofty—each cloathed with sumptuous and unceasing timber from the base to the summit, the garb of many thousand years, each tree perishing in an imperceptible progression, and each as imperceptibly renewed! The whole and the individual still appearing the same, always conveying a grand idea of the munificence of Nature and the immutability of all her works. This view was sufficient to lead the mind into a serious contemplation which assumed a character of melancholy, when I reflected on the endless scenes of the same nature, only more pregnant with danger, vicissitude, and death, through which I had to pass. The river, for nine hundred miles, with the exception of a few intervals, chosen

in general for the seats of towns, villages, and farms, is bounded by lofty banks and high mountains, which shed a gloom on its surface, and convey less of pleasurable sensation than that of sublimity and surprise. I reflected, too, that I was lengthening the chain of all my former friendships; that I was to pass through countries where death attacked man in a variety of new and alarming shapes; that I was proceeding to New Orleans, a city two thousand two hundred miles off, where fate uniformly demands nine out of ten of every visitant, and that, should I escape this destiny, I should still be six thousand miles from home, and have, in that distance, to meet with other numerous dangers, presenting themselves under every form that could manifest a terrific appearance. A small immediate difficulty put a quick conclusion to these gloomy meditations. We had dropt down near three miles

when an island appeared a head—the channel was on the right side, and the wind, from that quarter, had set me too much to the left. I instantly put the boat's head across the river, and with infinite exertion of oars gained the true current: but not till the water changed colour, indicating soundings of three feet on the bar which stretched out of the head of the island. I had to learn from this the necessity of moralizing less and of keeping a better look out. It was Hamilton's island which I was passing at the rate of seven miles an hour.—The island, by contracting the breadth of the channel, gives more impetuosity to the current, and forces a boat along with double its rapidity in the ordinary and open parts of the river.

Four miles from Hamilton's island and seven from Pittsburgh is Irwin's island. The channel is about one-third from the right hand shore. The first

ripple is just below the head of the island, where I had to leave a large breaker, or rock close to my right hand. The second, or Horse-tail ripple, is a small distance below the first, and the channel which is not twice the length of the boat, lies between a bar and some large breakers. The third ripple is within half a mile of the lower end of Irwin's island; the channel is about one-third of the width of the river from the right side, and close to the upper end of the bar. From this to a little town called Macintosh, I met with a series of these ripples, which required the most exact look out, and two islands called Hogs' and Crows' island, the former on account of its acorns inviting the periodical visits of hogs, and the latter from being perceived to be the favorite resort of rooks and crows. I cannot think that you would conceive it of any profit or pleasure to receive from me

my exact notes of the causes, &c. of the river and channel, I shall therefore content myself with transmitting you such remarks as may have something of interest above the contents of communications meant as a mere pilot to the river. I neglect this detail the more willingly, as I understand "a Pilot for the rivers" is now in the press, and will shortly be published at Pittsburg. Thus are we relieved from the necessity of much dull detail.

Macintosh is situated on the right side of the Ohio, about a quarter of a mile below Big Beaver creek; the situation is beautiful and commanding, as there is at present a considerable, and in some time must be a very great trade up and down this creek, the sources of which nearly reach the borders of lake Eric. The town is encreasing rapidly, and contains many *stores*, where the merchants exchange their goods for the

produce of the back country, whose market is New Orleans or the isles. Fifty miles in the interior of this place, and on the bank of Mahoneny creek, the town of Warren is pleasantly situated. Fourteen miles below, on the same creek, is Young's town, a small place, but said to be progressing rapidly.

Just below Macintosh, which is twe - ty eight miles from Pittsburg, is an island called after the same name, a second island not named, and a third called Grape island. On this last I landed, and soon discovered the propriety of the name: the passage through it in every direction was rendered intricate, by the multitudes of vines, which extended from tree to tree, rising to the tops of some, and closely embracing the bodies of others. Having passed through a great deal of toil during the day in avoiding a variety of danger, I was very well pleased to make the pretence

of curiosity a motive to myself, for stopping the remainder of the day and night in this little tranquil insulated world. I no sooner made this intention known, than all was bustle among us. The men with joy took to their oars: we soon gained the bank, and made fast to a tree, which bad defiance to the impotent though constant efforts of the current. The next step was to make "an encampment." Take care that you are not misled by this high sounding term. Formerly, indeed, the making an encampment, in this country, bore affinity to the notions you attach to that act at home: it was for the purpose of protection against Indians and wild beasts; but now it consists of nothing more than clearing a spot on which to make a large fire; stretch a blanket or piece of cloth on two bent poles to windward, and there make a shew of comfort, satisfaction, and repose. This

done, we each had his separate employment. Mindeth commenced preparations for dressing dinner; Cuff patiently sat on the side of the boat catching fish, and I took my gun and dog into the woods. I pierced to the left side of the island, a beautiful portion of which I found cleared, planted with Indian corn, and very promising wheat. A neat log-house soon appeared in view; I knocked, the door was opened by an old woman, about whom hung three children, the whole ematiated by sickness, and stained by the languid colours of death. They betrayed more fear than surprize, on beholding me. I banished this impression as soon as possible, by persuading the mother that I did not come to rob the house, or do her any manner of injury; that I was not a Kentuckey man, and that mere chance, not a disposition to plunder, brought me her way. On this she assumed some serenity, and told.

me that the Kentuckey men so often landed on her island to steal her fruit, fowls, hogs, &c. that she was alarmed at the sight of others, from an apprehension of their coming with the same design. The husband, who soon after came in, I found to be a German, who had lived long enough in Virginia to pick up some Negro-English. He informed me, that coming down the river four years past in his family boat, for want of keeping a good look out, or of knowing the river, he took the wrong channel, and stove his boat within two hundred yards of the spot where his house now stands. The water being shallow he got his goods ashore, and thinking the island possessed as good land as any he could procure elsewhere, he determined to proceed no farther, but to pitch his tent where providence had cast him, and set with a good heart about building a log-house, and clearing ground for maize, in

the first instance, and then for wheat and other objects of agriculture. He effected this laborious purpose to admiration. His house was comfortable; his garden neat; and he had six acres of land under a crop which appeared perfectly thriving. He had bought a male and female pig, which had multiplied in the woods prodigiously, and nothing appeared to interrupt his happiness but *the people of Kentuck*, as he called all those who occasionally made a descent on his island either to pursue game or to injure him. Robinson Crusoe never stood in so much dread of an Indian invasion than this poor German did of his own fellow citizens and inhabitants of a neighbouring state. It was this apprehension it seems which hindered him from making his settlement on the channel side of the island, which, under any other impression would be infinitely superior; more eligible for market; and

more interesting and convenient to the pleasures and comforts of life. In fact, he explained to me his motives in fewer words: they were precisely these: if the people of Kentuck find me out sometimes in this silent part, how should I be able to live when, the sight of smoke, the crowing of cocks, and the barking of dogs would call them all upon me?" Having no manner of reply to make to this argument, I invited the philosopher to my boat, and by the way conversed with him on the subject of the vines, on which I wanted information. I learned that they bore a small sour fruit, growing in clusters of from two ounces to three lbs. The fruit was not eatable nor calculated to have good wine expressed from it. He imagined that this evil was owing to the vines growing under large trees which entirely deprived them of the heat of the sun. Under this influence he transplanted some roots

into his garden field; on the second year they produced a fruit not quite so small as that in an uncultivated state; on the third year the grapes looked much better, but before they could ripen they were withered and exhausted by the heat of the sun. I told him that a medium between extreme shade and exposure appeared the thing to be desired. He said he believed so too. The argument was not pursued: I hurried him to my encampment, where I found prepared an excellent dinner, or rather a supper, for the sun but faintly glimmered on the tops of the highest trees of the opposite mountain, and the silent serenity of evening reigned in the place of the glare of the day. My new acquaintance was much pleased with his treatment and repast. I gave him a good glass of grog, and sent him home with a small present for his wife of tea and sugar;—articles on which people,

in proportion to their distance from such luxuries, set an encreased value. I never asked him why he himself looked so poorly, or why his wife and children were so afflicted with indisposition? The reasons were too evident to make it necessary to touch a string which could vibrate nothing but discord.—Excessive perspiration from continual labor, and exposure to rain and nightly dews before the completion of the house, hurt the constitution of this poor couple, and the regular periodical fevers which visit them are hastening them and their children to an early dissolution.—Were it not for this, who would not envy them the monarchy of their little island; the tranquillity of their lives; and the innocence of their pursuits!

The night advanced rapidly, and with it a pleasing impression of seriousness, unknown to any but those who are exposed to dangerous events, and who

like me are used to live and sleep under the open air. Cuff seemed determined to augment this disposition by reciting various stories of accidents happening on the waters; of murders committed; robberies perpetrated; of whirlpools, cataracts, and rapid falls, &c. &c. These dismal narrations had the good effect of awaking in our minds a remembrance of obligation to heaven; a desire to merit a continuance of mercy; and a disposition to cast ourselves on the bounty of a Providence which had hitherto accorded so many kind interpositions. If such sentiments as these have been found favourable to happiness in the bosom of society, and in the midst of safety and ease, you may judge how much more useful and necessary they are when exposed to danger on the surface of waters, or in the depth and borders of gloomy woods. This effect on me was a perfect composure, and an uninterrupted night's

rest. I laid a bear-skin on the sand, put my saddle bags under my head, and placing my feet to the fire, there remained till the morning; when the clamour of rooks, and melody of birds of various kinds, rebuked my sluggishness. Cheerful and refreshed, we cast off our fastening; jumped into our boat; in ten minutes gained the strongest stream, and in ten more arrived at Georgetown.

Georgetown is a small but flourishing place, just above the mouth of Mill-creek. It is pleasantly situated on a very high bank. A post-office has been lately established there.

Nearly opposite to Georgetown, and a few yards from the shore, a spring rises from the bottom of the river, which produces an oil nearly similar to seneca oil. I conjecture that this must proceed from a large bed of mineral coal in the vicinity of the spring. On first hearing of this, from an intelligent Scotchman,

the post-master at Georgetown, whom I questioned as to the curiosities of his neighbourhood, I immediately crossed over in my canoe to examine the well, and search for grounds on which to establish some particular conclusions. I found none perfectly satisfactory. The surface, about four feet in diameter, was covered over with an olive-coloured slime, here and there rising in lobes filled, but not agitated with confined air. On a more minute inspection however I perceived these globules burst and subside in gentle undulations, enclosing in a circle a matter whose colour was less deep than that prevailing on the general face of the well. On discovering other globules to rise in succession, I gently dipt up a gourd-full of water and globules, while in the act of rising through the surface. I spilt the whole on the blade of the paddle, and could distinguish, very plainly, the oil which

had been exposed to the air from the oil which just rose in search of it. On sounding, I found the well to be sixty-five feet deep; that is as deep as the bed of the adjacent river. On examining the neighbourhood it was plain that coal abounded; but I could not take upon me to assert that the well or its sources had any communication with that or any other mineral. As a last act, I skimmed off a gourd-full of oil, and again crossing the river, went to the house of a doctor whom I supposed capable of analizing the subject for me. On seeing my gourd full of oil, and the interest I took in the investigation of its properties, he very handsomely told me, that "*he had but just turned doctor; and had not as yet given his time to such things.*" My admiration of his candour covered him from contempt, and I returned to my Scotch friend more full of the dangerous idea of a man but "just turned doctor,"

and let loose on a sickly world, than I was of my gourd of oil, or the consequence of the discovery of its virtues to mankind. I did not however abandon the pursuit. Assisted by the highlander's wife, I exposed the oil to slow fusion, a quick boil and finally set it on fire. Its emotion while over the fire was uncommonly great, and when, entirely separated from watery particles, it caught fire, it consumed in a blaze more lively and sudden than that which hovers over spirits, of ordinary proof, when inflamed. During the progressive stages of this operation I kept the noses of all the obliging family occupied over the fume. Owing to a difference in the construction of that organ, as a variation in the sensibility of the olfactory nerve, no two of them gave the same opinion as to their notion of the effluviæ. Indeed their opinions were wide and discordant, agreeing but in this essential point that there was no smell

of sulphur. This accorded with my idea, though it traverses that which I first gave, "that the oil proceeded from a bed of mineral coal." The effluviæ to me not only appeared divested of sulphur, but to be impregnated with a vegetable aromatic smell. Though by no means content with the result of my researches, I still draw from these their deductions.

1st. The oil rising in a distinct intermittent globular from the bottom to the surface proves that it does not issue in a continued stream from any rock or mineral strata, but that it is emitted drop by drop, in the manner of slow and reluctant distillation.

2dly. The oil is not therefore generated by the sun from particles rising in the water favorable to that liquid, though the sun changes its colour on exposure of its rays.

3dly. This change of colour from a light yellow to a dark olive betrays a sul-

phurous quality, yet the absence of the smell and taste of that mineral entirely discountenances the opinion that it exists in it. And

4thly. From the spirit residing in the oil, the aromatic flavor and smell, it is not unreasonable to presume that it possesses medicinal virtues which, under a judicious administration, might be productive of salutary effects.

This latter deduction is strengthened by the testimony of the Scotchman who says the well was much frequented by the Indians previously to their retreat to the back countries, and that the neighbouring whites used the oil as a friction when suffering with rheumatism, and as an unction when afflicted with sores.

Much to the satisfaction of the good hostess and her family, who could not refrain from laughter at my zeal and earnestness, on a subject to them "signifying nothing," our gourd and nostrums

were pitched out of doors, and they sat about preparing a repast to which I got a most hearty and welcome invitation. This gives you a most favorable respite, and me another opportunity of persuading you how much I am, &c.

LETTER X.

Course of the Ohio to Stubenville—Custard island—Stubenville—Congress lands—Indian honorable confederacy—Insidious means of ill disposed whites to possess the country, and exterminate its inhabitants—The Indians become undeceived, and resume the great federal tomahawk.—They put to death many of their cruel invaders, who place themselves under protection of Congress, and receive its support—Events of an Indian war—Peace restored—its terms—Finesse of Congress to possess the Indian lands—Hence arose the north-west territory, now the Ohio

State—The subject of Congress lands continued—nature of their sales, and price of these lands—their great profit to land-jobbers—increase of population of the State—a Dutch purchaser, his sentiments after experience.

Stubenville, State of Ohio, May, 1806.

I LEFT Georgetown on the evening of the day I informed you I was to dine with the hospitable post-master, and gained this place, nineteeen miles, in four hours, but not without a good look out and some exertion at the oars. I should have told you that the Pennsylvania line crosses at the mouth of Mill creek, and a little below the mouth of another creek called Little Beaver. This line separates that State from Virginia on the left hand, and the Ohio State on the right, when descending the river, and gives Pennsylvania a length of territory from the Atlantic to this line of near five thousand

miles! I passed this afternoon by five islands lying from two to three or four miles from each other; covered with wood and overrun with flowers and fine pasture. One was called Custard Island, in consequence of its abounding with the papaw, which is vulgarly known by the name of the Custard tree. The fruit of the papaw when ripe, exactly resembles in taste the flavor, composition and colour, a custard of the best quality. It may be eaten in moderation without danger. There is one circumstance however attending this fruit of a very remarkable nature. Man, and many other animals, eat it with safety and pleasure, whilst a hog, the most ravenous and least circumspect of all creatures, turns from it with antipathy or a fear of danger. This is one of those subjects whose depth is too great to be fathomed by human intelligence.

Having arrived late at Stubenville I

made secure my boat against a steep bank and clean shore, and went up to the town with the view of passing the night, and gaining some knowledge of the surrounding country.

The town is pleasantly situated on the right bank of the river and in the Ohio State. A land office is kept here for the sale of Congress lands, which brings a number of purchasers, and at times makes a considerable appearance of activity. I must explain the expression of "Congress Lands."

Little more than twenty years have elapsed since the whole of the right bank of the Ohio was called the Indian Country or the Indian Side. It was inhabited by the remains of several scattered aboriginal nations, who, driven from their former grounds were in hopes of being left in the peaceable possessions of this country. To this effect they buried the tomahawk of enmity which subsisted be-

tween each other; the calumut of peace was sent from camp to camp, and from tribe to tribe. A social compact was the immediate consequence and the world witnessed the new spectacle of a savage association formed on political principles, and organized with a wisdom and energy which would honor the first States of Europe. Individual and national animosities were forgotten. A general and national council was formed of warriors and *talkers* from the councils of the particular tribes, and this council assumed the name of " the High Council of Confederated Indians." The debates of this instructive assembly principally turned on the propriety of cultivating a warm friendship with the whites, and on the necessity imposed on them, by the limits set to their hunting grounds, of learning the social arts, and of devoting themselves to the pursuits of agriculture and commerce. These were

the intuitions of this primitive people. The discontented and vagabond part of the United States saw this confederacy with a malignant eye. The idea of Indian policy or savage association productive of moral and public happiness, was a thing too insufferable to be endured by those who were taught to believe the Indians little inferior to brutes, and who delighted in their extermination. Besides it was whispered abroad that "the Indian country" was the finest in the world; that Imley's dreams applied to it alone, and that the French, who had visited it from the Canada border, considered it as the paradise of the new world. This was more than sufficient to inspire a disposition to possess this charming territory, and to annihilate its inhabitants. The whites in the adjacent parts of Pennsylvania, Virginia, and Kentuckey, commenced this work of premeditation and death; not by open violence, but by a

means much more fatal, that of profered friendship, and a shew of conciliation and amicable spirit. They set distilleries to work, and backed by the destructive instrument of ardent spirits, and furnished with some coarse blankets, matchlocks, beads, and bawbles for sale, they visited their unsuspecting friends, who sold them their possessions in exchange for this poison and trumpery, and by degrees, retired from their favorite waters into the bosom of the deepest woods. So ignorant were they of the value of their own landed property, and so high an estimation did they set on the infamous spirits brought among them by their perfidious friends, that whole tribes have been known to sell the rights of their nations to lands, of upwards of two hundred thousand acres, for as much whiskey as could intoxicate them at one great public festival or even feast of warriors and chiefs. Seduced by the success of

the first speculators, a host of adventurers crowded in from all parts, who geting bold in proportion to their numbers, they began to sieze on lands even without the shallow pretext of an impositious purchase, and drove the Indians from possessions they had begun to cultivate, and in consequence to value and esteem. The High National Council became alarmed: the great federal tomahawk, with great solemnity, was taken from the ground: red feathers was sent to every nation, and war against the cruel insatiable whites was publicly declared. To the gratification of every man inspired by the honourable principles of humanity and justice, this declaration was followed by the instant and sudden death of the greatest part of their cruel and blood thirsty invaders. Those who escaped and who wished for the continuance of a few years, appealed for protection to Congress, and to its eternal disgrace and infamy,

the Congress afforded them both succour and approbation. An Indian war was the universal cry through the whole States: volunteers rushed from every quarter, and wretched was he whose parent's circumstance or situation denied him the glory of exterminatiug with his own hand some forty, or fifty Indians. For the commissions of a troop of cavalry raised for this service, General Washington had received upwards of four thousand memorials, issuing from compting houses, banks, farms, manufactures, and public and private schools. But God and justice for a time resided with the Indians. Such was their success that the moral and the good cried out, "surely they are the armies of the living God." They fought several pitched battles with the Americans, and reduced their army several times to the necessity of being renewed and recruited. One commander in chief, several staff officers,

and a multitude of privates were killed in one particular engagement, from the field of which the whites had to fly several miles; on their return next day, they found the mouths and bodies of their generals and companions killed in battle, stuffed and crammed with earth, and stuck through with the boughs and branches of trees. At this dreadful but just spectacle they were struck with horror and remorse. What, said they, we came into this country in search of new acquisition and territory, and we now find by the lesson before us, that we are to purchase it in this terrific way; that for a mouthful of it we are to surrender our lives. For this in fact was precisely what the Indian figure implied. Conciliation followed. Deputations passed. Boundaries were fixed, and peace was proclaimed with the Indian tribes throughout America with much more joy than that which was manifested at the con-

conclusion of the war with the British. Congress ordained that no individual should purchase Indian lands whether from individuals or from tribes; that Indian life and property was under the ægis of the law as firmly as though they were appertaining to actual American citizens, and that commerce, dealings, and intercourse with them should be conducted with a respect to their own regulations, and the regards and justice due to all people. This conduct in the Congress was highly satisfactory to the Indians, who did not see through its real and hidden motives. They did not perceive that Congress reserved to itself the right of legally robbing them. This was soon after done. A regular mission was sent to the Indians proposing to give them some few thousand dollars, and a certain sum annually, and a few trinkets, if they would intirely sell their country and retire to near the lakes, the peaceable

possession of which the Americans would inviolably secure to them. Dazzled by these meritorious offers, their folly abandoned what their valour could have maintained, and they now reside and receive their annuity in the neighbourhood of Detrail, and along the waters of their far famed Ontario, whose beauties breathe through their lungs, and whose wonders magnify all their tradition.

This purchase effected, the Indian country took the name of the North-West Territory, and, a few years since, on its determined increase of population, it assumed the title of the Ohio State, and bids fair, in a very short time to rank high in the federal union. It is about five hundred square miles, bounded on the north by the lakes and Canada; on the south by Ohio river, on the east by part of Pennsylvania and New York, and on the west by the Indian territory,

which in its turn will soon become a state.

This state is watered by several navigable rivers running from the north to the Ohio, and by numerous creeks and streams winding nearly the same course. Its banks on the Ohio are far more eligible for settlements than the opposite Virginian and Kentuckey shore. Villages and settlements are within very few miles of each other, and the towns of Marcella and Cincennall, are large and rising into commercial eminence. The principal town is Chilecothe, situated nearly in the centre of the state; there the government resides, and is held the principal land office, &c. &c.

The land of the plains; of the borders of rivers; of the great meadows, and of all the tract lying between the two Miamis (two rivers so called) is without any exception the finest known in the world. The great part then of this land

being obtained by Congress from the Indians by an imposition, called by the fallacious name of a legal purchase, is known by the name of "Congress Lands," as stated in the early part of this letter, and exposed you to this long dissertation on Indian war and topographical history. I resume however the subject of "Congress Lands."

By virtue of the treaty with the aboriginal confederacy and subsequent purchases, Congress has become the proprietor of nearly all the fine lands in the state. I have mentioned where such lands most abound, and should have stated that nearly one-third of the country is mountainous and ridgy, bog and morass, to such a degree as not to be worth one cent. per acre. The principal part of the state of this character lies to the north-east, and east of the river Scioto. The best land is to the west of that river, and continues with few excep-

tions to the boundary westward of the Great Miami. It is very necessary that purchasers at a distance should be aware of this, as I have known several who bought in a distant market at a good price come several thousand miles to take possession of a sterile mountain or an unreclaimable swamp. The truth is, that no person should buy who is not on the spot, or who has not a confidential agent. The mode of sale adopted by Congress is highly commendable. The entire country is surveyed and divided into sections of six hundred and forty acres each. A certain number of these sections lying contiguous compose a township, and a certain number of townships forms a range. The sections are all numbered, and each number sixteen in every township is reserved for the purpose of education and the support of its professors. There are also reservations which cannot be sold under eight dollars

an acre; but every other acre of Congress land is sold at two dollars per acre for ever: and, to encourage settlers, the period of four years is allowed for the entire payment which commences one-fourth at the bargain, and the remainder at three yearly instalments. This indulgence on the part of government was most productive to a few sordid monopolizers, called land jobbers, or land speculators, who made large contracts for twenty thousand to five hundred thousand acres of the best land and in the best situations, and have already sold the greatest part at from three to five dollars an acre. A meadow called the Rick-a-way plains, containing ten thousand acres free of wood, is advanced, by one of these gentlemen, from the two dollars an acre to be paid by his contract, to thirty dollars per acre, and a considerable part of it is already sold. The portion under cultivation has yielded one hundred and ten

bushels of corn, and fifty bushels of wheat per acre. The land the most sought after is on the Scioto, the Ohio, and the Miamis: on which situations the title of Congress is for the most part bought up, and the present owners demand for it from six to twelve dollars per acre. But if the land should be on a mill seat, or place eligible for the site of a village or town, the price might possibly be raised to one hundred dollars per acre.

Many local circumstances sometimes also unite to raise the price of certain lands. Such as their vicinity to improving towns; their abundance of ship timber, the facility of conveying it to builders' yards, and their possession of the sugar maple, cherry tree, sassafras, cotton, and other plants. On the whole, I know of no speculation so promising, as that of buying the remaining good lands, reservations, and all (except

schools, reservations which are never to be sold) from Congress at two dollars per acre, and of holding them for the space of ten years; after that period no moderate land will be sold under ten dollars per acre, and land of the first qualities and situation will fetch fifty in general, and much more in particular, per acre. The reasons for this are obvious; the lands of the Atlantic States are not to be compared to these in point of fertility and every excellence; the climate here is not worse, and the State tolerates no slavery.

This last circumstance has already given it the name of the independent country; the state where man is free but not licentious. In consequence, quakers, and other religious professors, enemies to intolerance and oppression, whether christian or political, have settled in the state, and are daily followed by thousands who either admire, or affect to advocate their principles and

doctrines. Such has been this rage, that the last ten years has added to the state one hundred thousand inhabitants, said to be the most peaceable, inoffensive, moral, and industrious citizens belonging to the American nation. I have a very strong predilection for the state, I must own to you, and a presentiment, from what I observe and hear at present, that my future experience will justify all my hopes, and prove to you that I am more happy when a people permit me to say any thing in their favor, than when their vices and follies compel me to condemn them. I do not mean to be more particular on the subject just now, as I shall have to observe and say a vast deal more relating to the state during my voyage down its southern border along the river. I must notwithstanding remark, generally, that the climate is very relaxing from excess of heat in summer, and

very dangerous from the precarious and uncertain vicissitudes of it in winter. Those two seasons are however the most healthy. The spring and *fall*, as autumn is here called, are subject to visitations of diarrhæa and fever, but not in so great a degree as in the lower parts of the river. These facts might be sufficient to deter moderate minds from exposing themselves and families to such a climate and to such vicissitudes;—if they be not, there are not wanting others sufficiently cogent and strong to cause reflection at least before steps of such consequence as emigrations are taken. I have asserted and have to maintain it, that land is to be had of the most superior quality at an extraordinary low price. But I ask you, who are a lover of reasoning and an advocate of common sense, whether the words good and cheap are not to be considered as relative terms to be com-

pared with those of moderate and dear, in order to distinguish their appropriate acceptations. But to have done with this jargon, and speak a more comprehensive language, I will give you an honest Dutchman's opinion of the business, who has purchased experience and qualified himself to give instruction and advice:—Being dissatisfied with lands in Pennsylvania, which, with hard and unceasing industry, yielded but from seven to twelve bushels of wheat per acre; from twenty-five to thirty-five of corn; and so on in proportion with other produce, he came into the Ohio state and purchased a very fine section from Congress at two dollars per acre. This land was equal to his most sanguine expectations. Three years after it was cleared it produced him one hundred bushels of Indian corn, and from forty to fifty of wheat per acre. This delighted the Dutchman; the argument

appeared strong, and the old Pennsylvania farm began to be talked of only to be despised. This triumph was but of short duration. The Dutchman was near two thousand miles from the principal market; this he could not attend; storekeepers and itinerant merchants bought his produce at their own prices in exchange, often for unnecessary goods, and the profits of his most luxurious harvests were no more, saying the best, than those of his former farm, when in the vicinity of a market, where the price of produce always bore affinity to the quality of land and the labor employed to render it prolific. The Dutchman had to compare but one article: at his former market he could get from ten to twelve dollars per barrel for his flour, in his present situation he can get but three. And, as he is occasionally visited by grubs, flies, and clouds of locusts, he cannot average his wheat crop at

above thirty *nett* bushels per acre; therefore, he and his family must in future speak in less disrespectful terms of the old Pennsylvania farm, and recommend, as he tells me he always does, his former neighbours to enquire the price of produce before they pretend to fix a value on land, or leave their old settlements without the good grounds of unprejudiced calculations, and ample and liberal enquiries.

I propose to leave this place to-morrow morning. I have not heard of any thing further of sufficient interest to improve or entertain, though you may be well convinced that I annoy every person whose countenance beams intelligence, and even those whose features manifest none. I make no doubt that I am considered a strange medley; an interrogative animal passing through society merely to perplex it with questions; to gain all information and to communi-

cate none. Some stare at me with astonishment when I abruptly address them, and others not knowing what to answer turn on their heel. What a foolish man, say all, to lose his time and go in such a manner through the world, merely to ask questions!

LETTER XI.

Charlestown—Vicious taste in building to the river—copied from Philadelphia—its punishment—Navigation from Charlestown to Wheeling—this port-town described—its origin—sketch of the inhabitants and their propensities—a Virginian horse-race—a boxing-match—A ball and supper—the sequel—a pathetic story.

Wheeling, Virginia, April, 1806.

THE morning after my departure from Stubenville, I dropped seven miles lower down to breakfast at Charlestown, on the opposite shore.

Charlestown is finely situated on the Virginia side, at the junction of Buffalo creek and the Ohio. It is a flourishing place, commanding the trade of the surrounding rich settlement; and having many excellent mills, is much resorted to by purchasers of flour. The boats can be purchased at the Pittsburgh price, and articles of provision on very reasonable terms.

The town, which contains about one hundred and fifty houses, was originally well laid out with the best row facing the river, and the intermediate space answered the purpose of a street, explanade and water terrace, giving an air of health and cheerfulness gratifying to the inhabitants, and highly pleasing to

those descending the stream. However, owing to the avarice of the proprietor of the terrace, and a disgraceful absence of judgment and taste, he has sold his title to the water side, and the purchasers are now building on it; turning the back of their houses immediately close to the edge of the bank, and excluding all manner of view and communication from the best of the town. This violation of taste, it seems, is not to go unpunished. The bank is undermining fast, and in a very few years, these obtruding edifices must fall unless removed. This vice of building to the high water mark, is not peculiar to Charlestown: Philadelphia set the example. Philadelphia, which might have had an open airy explanade of four miles long, on a beautiful river, facing a delightful cultivated shore, has not now thirty feet of quay. The storehouses are absolutely built on piles in

the water, and crouded on each other in such a manner, as to convey an idea of deficiency of land for the extension of the city, and to carry on its commercial affairs. Philadelphia has long suffered by these disgraceful erections. The yellow fever there maintains a perpetual residence, or annually issues from a crowded water side to pollute the whole town, and carry off its thousands!* I could not resist apologising this much with the Charlestown citizens. They wished me good bye as I departed, and I previously wished them an improvement of reason and taste.

The channel from Charlestown continued on the Virginia shore till I came to Beach Bottom, when it wore over to the right-hand side. The navigation then

* The great fire of London was eventually beneficial. The plague was frequent before that calamity, but since the improved airyness of the after-built streets, it has never occurred.

became intricate, being obstructed by a ripple; Pike Island, Twin Islands, from being similar and close together, Glin's Run and Wheeling Island. From this last island to Wheeling, I beg you to observe how accurate one must be. These are the instructions.

Channel on the Virginia shore—*at* the upper end keep near to the shore, *thence* across towards the island for about one hundred yards; *when* you come in sight of the next ripple, make still more towards the island, and *after* you pass the ripple, keep down near the middle between the shore and the island, till you pull in for Wheeling.—You may perceive from this, that a steersman has sufficient occupation, and that the oars must sometimes work.

The town of Wheeling is well known as one of the most considerable places of embarkation to traders and emigrants, on the western waters. It is a port-

town, healthfully and pleasantly situated on a very high bank of the river, and is encreasing rapidly. Here quantities of merchandize designed for the Ohio country, and the upper Louisiana, are brought in waggons during the dry seasons; as boats can frequently go from hence, when they cannot from places higher up the river. Besides, as the navigation above Wheeling is more dangerous than all the remainder of the river, persons should undoubtedly give it the preference to Pittsburg. The distance by water to Pittsburg is eighty two miles; by land only forty-five, by a good road. A coach runs from Philadelphia also, to this town, for thirty dollars each passenger; and the waggons which daily arrive, charge little more per cent. than the Pittsburg price. On the whole, I give this place a decided preference, and prognosticate,

that it will ultimately injure and rival all the towns above its waters.

The town is formed of about two hundred and fifty houses; ten of which are built of brick, eighteen of stone, and the remainder of logs. The plain on which it stands, containing about seven hundred acres, is surrounded by immense hills, except on the lowermost side; where it is bounded by a fine creek of clear water, near the head of which are erected some fine mills for flour and timber.

This plain, although, one hundred feet above low water, was originally formed by the river subsiding; and there is a narrower place, or what is here called, *bottom*, immediately flowing from the hills, which also was under water; but, by the growth of its timber, and superior height, its submergement must have been at a much more remote period than that of the plain on which

the town is built. A part of the latter is now avery small but excellent race ground.

The original settlers were not calculated to give importance to an infant establisment. Had they been so, had they attended to worthy commercial pursuits, and industrious and moral dealings, in place of rapine on Indian property, drunkenness, horse-racing, and cock-fighting, their town would have rivalled Pittsburg long since, and have now enjoyed a respectable name.

This part of Virginia was, at no very remote period, deemed the *frontier*, not only of Virginia, but of America. To this frontier all persons outlawed, or escaping from justice, fled, and resided without the apprehension of punishment, or the dread of contempt and reproach. They formed a species of nefarious republic, where equality of crime constituted a social band, which

might to this day have remained unbroken, but for the effects of the conclusion of the Indian war, which extended the frontier across the river nearly to the Canada line, leaving the ancient boundary within the jurisdiction of government, and under the immediate grasp of the law. Those who fled from the restraints of moral and political obligations, were exasperated at this unforeseen event, and felt hurt that a better sort of people came among them. The consequence previously assumed by thieves and swindlers, fled the presence of morals and justice. Such as were determined not to submit to an improvement of life, and a daily comparison of character, left the country; while others, who "repented of their ways," remained, and are now blended with the better order of citizens. Of these materials, the society of this town is now formed. But I have

it from the good authority of a quaker of high respectability, that the old settlers will all be *bought out* in time, and the place become new and regenerated. He founds his hopes on the belief that his friends, when backed by others of their profession, to settle in the town, will gain an ascendency in the municipal affairs; abolish cock-fighting, horse-racing, fighting, drinking, gambling, &c. and, above all, enforce the observance of the sabbath and other solemn days.

I assured the quaker, that if ever he saw his hopes realized, that he would not only clear the town of its original race, but of every profligate whatsoever, and deter others of similar description, from coming into it. He appeared much pleased at this assurance, though he deemed its consummation as arduous as Herculean labour. I fear in this respect he is too well founded: indeed, my acquaintance with the place, convin-

ces me that much time and unremitted assiduity must be employed to make it a tolerable residence for any class of men, much less a society of quakers. The majority of the present inhabitants have no means whatever of distinguishing Sunday, but by a greater degree of violence and debauchery than the affairs of ordinary days will allow them to manifest. Even on occasion of business, the smallest occurrence will draw them from it, and expose it to total negligence.

Yesterday two fellows drinking in a public-house, the conversation turned on the merit of their horses—two wretched animals they had ridden into town that morning, and which had remained fasting at a post. A wager, the consequence of every argument on this side the mountains, was made, and the poor brutes were gallopped off to the race-course. Two-thirds of the population followed:—blacksmiths, ship-

wrights, all left work: the town appeared a desert. The stores were shut. I asked a proprietor why the warehouses did not remain open. He told me all good was done for that day: that the people would remain on the ground till night, and many stay till the following morning. I was determined to see this Virginian recreation, which caused such an abandonment of care and business. On my arrival on the ground, the original race had been won, and the price of a saddle was collecting to excite another course, and raise new opponents. This was soon effected: the course was cleared, and six poor devils were started for the saddle, and numerous bets laid by the owners and spectators. The number of persons interested in this affair, and some disputed points which occurred in the adjustment of it, gave rise to a variety of opinion: umpires were called in: their judgment was re-

jected, and a kind of general battle ensued. This affray over, the quarrel took a smaller circle, confined to two individuals, a Virginian by birth, and a Kentuckeyman by adoption. A ring was formed, and the mob demanded whether they proposed to *fight fair*, or to *rough and tumble*. The latter mode was preferred. Perhaps you do not exactly understand the distinction of these terms. Fight fair however is much in the English manner; and here, as there, any thing foul requires interference; but when parties choose to *rough and tumble*, neither the populace nor individuals are to intermeddle or hinder either combatant from tearing or rending the other on the ground, or in any other situation. You startle at the words *tear* and *rend*, and again do not understand me. You have heard these terms I allow applied to beasts of prey and to carnivorous animals; and your hu-

manity cannot conceive them applicable to man: it nevertheless is so, and the fact will not permit me the use of any less expressive term. Let me proceed. Bulk and bone were in favour of the Kentuckeyan; science and craft in that of the Virginian. The former promised himself victory from his power, the latter from his *science.* Very few rounds had taken place, or fatal blows given, before the Virginian contracted his whole form, drew up his arms to his face, with his hands nearly closed in a concave, by the fingers being bent to ths full extension of the flexors, and summoning up all his energy for one act of desperation, pitched himself into the bosom of his opponent. Before the effects of this could be ascertained, the sky was rent by the shouts of the multitude; and I could learn that the Virginian had expressed as much *beauty* and *skill* in his retraction and bound, as if he had been

bred in a menagerie, and practised action and attitude among panthers and wolves. The shock received by the Kentuckeyan, and the want of breath, brought him instantly to the ground. The Virginian never lost his hold; like those bats of the south who never quit the subject on which they fasten till they taste blood, he kept his knees in his enemies body; fixing his claws in his hair, and his thumbs on his eyes, gave them an instantaneous start from their sockets. The sufferer roared aloud, but uttered no complaint. The citizens again shouted with joy. Doubts were no longer entertained; and bets of three to one were offered on the Virginian. The Kentuckeyan not being able to disentangle his adversary from his face, adopted a new mode of warfare; and, in imitation of the serpent which crushes such creatures to death as it proposes for its food, he extended his arms round the Vir-

ginian and hugged him into closer contact with his huge body. The latter disliking this, cast loose the hair and convex eyes of his adversary, when both, folded together like bears in an embrace, rolled several turns over each other. The acclamations encreased, and bets run that the Kentuckeyan "*would give out*," that is, after being mutilated and deprived of his eyes, ears, and nose, he would cry out for mercy and aid. The public were not precisely right. Some dæmon interposed for the biggest monster; he got his enemy under him, and in an instant snapt off his nose so close to his face that no manner of projection remained. The little Virginian made one further effort, and fastening on the under lip of his mutilator tore it over the chin. The Kentuckeyan at length *gave out*, on which the people carried off the victor, and he preferring a triumph to a doctor, who came to

cicatrize his face, suffered himself to be chaired round the ground as the champion of the times, and the first *rougher and tumbler*. The poor wretch, whose eyes were started from their spheres, and whose lips refused its office, returned to the town, to hide his impotence, and get his countenance repaired.

This spectacle ended, and the citizens refreshed with whiskey and biscuit, sold on the ground, the races were renewed, and possibly other editions of the monstrous history I have just recited; but I had had sufficient of the *sports of the day*, and returned to my quaker friend, with whom I had engaged to take my dinner. He was afflicted, but by no means surprised at the news I brought him, and informed me further, that such doings were common, frequently two or three times a week; and that twice a year, or at

the spring and fall races, they continued for fourteen days without interruption, aided by the licentious and profligate of all the neighbouring states. As to the savage practice of fighting in the manner of wild beasts, my host entertained no hopes whatever of ever seeing it put down. It might be called a national taste, which the laws appeared afraid to violate; and therefore it reared its head above authority. Few nights elapsed without the exhibition of this new gymnastic; few mornings appeared that did not bring to day a friend or acquaintance with the loss of an eye, or the mutilation of half his features. Alarmed at this account, I asked whether this kind of conduct spread down the river. I understood that it did on the left-hand side, and that I would do well to land there as little as possible: that many of the small inns on the Virginia and Kentuckey shore, were held in solitary

situations by persons of infamous character, driven from the interior and the head waters, by the gradual encroachments made on them by morals, religion, and justice. At such taverns, there were always persons at no loss for a subject of quarrel. The invariable consequence of which was, the loss of sight, and sometimes of life, and the total confiscation of property, by the villains, who, on maiming, or murdering the inoffensive party, rush out of the house, sieze his boat and descend the river, never more to be heard of—the landlord swearing he had never seen them before, or had any knowledge to what place they belonged. All the taverns, however, are not so bad. There was generally to be found one of a better sort in towns and villages where there was some semblance of law, or some apprehension of justice. I again demanded how a stranger was to dis-

tinguish a good from a vicious house of entertainment? I was answered, by previous inquiry, or, if that was impracticable, a tolerable judgment could be formed, from observing in the landlord, *a possession, or an absence of ears:* many of the proprietors of small inns being men who had left those members nailed to certain penitential market crosses in Maryland, Pennsylvania, and the Carolinas, in lieu of certain horses and cattle of which they had from time to time become the illegal owners. Furnished with these useful instructions, I left my kind entertainer, and retired to my inn with a view of passing a peaceable night. It was not so ordained. It seems the store keepers, and the principal citizens, knowing the people had no intention of returning to their avocations, had resolved to amuse themselves, and associated for the purpose of having a ball and supper at the

principal inn. On my arrival, the landlord, with much politeness, told me, that my quality of stranger and a gentleman, gave me a title to enter the public room. I benefitted by this intimation, yet, notwithstanding the delicacy and hospitality it conveyed, I could not resist casting a glance, *en passant*, at the head of my host, to observe whether it was provided with ears. Pleased on perceiving these ornamental appendages, or, to follow up the quaker's idea, these indications of character and safety, I entered the ball-room, which was filled with persons at cards, drinking, smoaking, dancing, &c. The *music* consisted of two bangies, played by negroes nearly in a state of nudity, and a lute, through which a Chickesaw breathed with much occasional exertion and violent gesticulations. The dancing accorded with the harmony of these instruments. The clamour of the card-

tables was so great, that it almost drowned every other; and the music of Ethiopia was with difficulty heard. A man should never judge of the principles of the entertainment of others, by his individual conceptions. This ball, considered a violent vulgar uproar by me, afforded the utmost delight to the assembly, and possibly would have concluded with infinite joy and satisfaction at an early hour next day, had not an unlucky wight of a drunken politician, seized a friend by the throat, and threatened to annihilate him, if he did not drink "Damnation to Thomas Jefferson." A bustle and crowd collected about the parties; the ladies and the music made a precipitate retreat, and I quickly followed, and learned from the landlord, who sat by his fire-side perfectly composed, that the ball was over—that a *row* had commenced, which was a signal for the retreat of the *graces*, and a

general break up. I hinted at the propriety of his interference, when he very cooly told me, that if there were any ruffians in company, *it was fit* they should be kicked out, and that, bad as the place was, there were always *gentlemen* at his balls who obligingly took that office on themselves. His words were soon verified. A cry of *out, out; whip them all!* issued from the room, immediately after a torrent rushed through the passage, and a noise of sticks, and cries, and execrations of every shade, modulation, and sort. The door locked on the whole party, and silence again restored, we visited the theatre of the late effervescence, and found but one person stretched on the ground. I was proceeding to express some apprehension, when my host exclaimed—"Oh! it is Mr. ———, he is only drunk, he will remain here quietly till morning." With that he drew

him along the floor to a corner, and having placed a few chairs as a guard, considered that he had done much towards his accommodation.

Though it was by this time far advanced in the night, and I felt no disposition to retire to rest; my mind was too much agitated and full, to benefit by a too sudden, or a forced repose; and I preferred the conversation of mine host one half-hour longer. It turned on the events of the day, and the evening amusement. He very candidly admitted all I said in favour of more civilized recreations; and even went so far as to tell me a variety of anecdotes, which, from a respect for human nature, I suppress. Were it not for the intervention of a *row*, which he considered an innocent occurrence, the close of balls could never be ascertained. He had known them to continue for six and thirty hours together, and many

of the men, at other times, have remained to gamble and drink for weeks after the original festival. These balls and rows were frequently followed by duels. That ball or row was thought a mild one, which did not produce from two to three of the latter. "An affair of this kind happened" said my landlord, "a few balls back, involving in its consequences, *out of the common*, and *rather* of a melancholy kind. A dispute," continued he, "took place, in my house, between two young men, who had been the most intimate friends, as much so, that one of them, Mr. H. who is my neighbour, was to be married the Sunday after the ball and the dispute, to the sister of the other, Mr. B. who lives but a small distance up the town. The ties to be formed from this intention, former intimacy, and the interposition of love and friendship, were all of no avail: to fight they were

determined; place and time were cautiously appointed. But love is not easily to be deceived. Maria, the sister of B. and the betrothed of H. received the fatal intelligence; hastened to the ground, and arrived—but in time only to hear the shot, and receive a bleeding lover in her extended arms. The lead past through his lungs—he instantly expired. The senses of Maria are lost: she knows no person: she has not spoke to a human being since! I can shew her to you to-morrow; a slender tall figure, her head and bosom covered with a black veil; her motion quick, and her air disturbed. She passes every day in her way to a favorite grave, and returns with an appearance still more dejected and broken-hearted. But the poor maid will soon join her lover, and leave a world in which she imagines she has no friend. I could hear no more, the Virginian himself was moved. I ordered

a light, and gaining my chamber cast myself on a bed to rest: yet not before I cursed the ferocity of manners which reigns in this place, and which caused the eternal wretchedness and misery of an object so amiable and instructing as my landlord's Maria. It is intolerable. It is infamous. Farewell. You can account for my abrupt conclusion.

LETTER XII.

A mail coach road from Philadelphia to Lexington in Kentuckey seven hundred miles.—Accommodations on the road—enchanting valley and creeks—their origin—history of the first settlement of Cooandanaga by Irish emigrants—its judicious regulations—Mr. Fitzpatrick its head—manner of passing Sunday in this little republic—general situation of its inhabitants—Long Reach—Indian imitations of animals.

Marietta, State of Ohio, May, 1806.

I HURRIED out of Wheeling with a precipitation which precluded all further inquiries, and perhaps in a state of mind unfavorable to the pursuit of any farther knowledge of that place. There is a very beautiful island directly opposite Wheeling, to which there is a ferry, and another ferry from the island to the Ohio shore, where commences a road leading to Chitocothe, and the interior of the State of which that town is the capital. The road for the most part is mountainous and swampy, notwithstanding which a mail coach is established on it, from Philadelphia to Lexington in Kentuckey, through Pittsburg, Wheeling, and Chitocothe, a distance of upwards of seven hundred miles, to be performed by contract in fifteen days. Small inns are to be found every ten, or twelve miles of the route. They are generally log huts

of one apartment, and the entertainment consists of bacon, whiskey, and Indian bread. Let those who despise this bill of fare remember that seven years since this road was called the Wilderness, and travellers had to encamp, find their own provisions, and with great difficulty secure their horses from panthers and wolves. Another remark is to be made on this great road. Directly on ascending the mountain in the rear of Wheeling an immense deep and gloomy valley appears in view; twelve miles long, by from two to six broad. It is compleatly surrounded by high mountains, through which there is but one small pass, serving for the current of the water of a beautiful creek that traverses the valley twelve different times in search of a level to facilitate its course to the Ohio and the sea. The road crosses the creek at every traverse, and, for the entire length is nearly a perfect plain, adorned

with trees of the most sumptuous growth; with corn and wheat of an unexampled luxuriance, and encircled by an amphitheatre of mountains, whose summits of eternal verdure are often embraced by the clouds. The soil, composed of decayed vegetable substances, and putrid animal remains, appears like a fine garden mould; it is, from three to sixteen feet deep, and, judging from the channel of the creek, is deposited on gravel and limestone rock. There are eight settlers on this enchanting spot, who have to regret nothing but the too transient visits of the sun, who in his meridian glory looks down on this little world, sheds upon it his most fervid rays, until intercepted by the mountains, towards the south he sets in the vigour of the day. I was about to give you a chain of philosophical reasoning and evidence to bear me out in an opinion that this valley was formed by the subsiding of water which found

an avenue in a circuit of the mountain, and by attrition wore it to its base, when it lost its volume and immensity, and assumed the gentle character of the present lovely vale drained of every thing noxious by a rapid and transparent creek, till I understood that the people of the country, not only entertained my opinion, but at once and without hesitation, called the place "the Dry Lake," or "the Valley of the Lake," by which name it is known to this day. I need mention but two of the motives on which they grounded their decision. 1st. The fissure in the mountain, through which the creek now flows, nearly from the origin to the base has, on each side, rocks, stones, and strata, wasted, indented, and hollowed by attrition. 2dly, The mountains' sides, from top to bottom, exhibit a regular series of swells and falls which are known to be the effect of the undula-

tory motion of waters and their periodical rise and descent.

About a mile below the dry lake, on the opposite side, a creek enters the Ohio, also from between the opening of a mountain. Immediately on leaving Wheeling, I worked my boat rather across the stream, and in less than ten minutes dropped into the mouth of the creek, where I made fast, and prepared to ascend the hill, take a view of the back country, and, if inviting, range through it. I scrambled with much difficulty to the summit, from which I plainly saw that the creek flowed through a valley nearly similar to that of the dry lake. Perceiving a well improved farm on the borders of the creek, and about a mile from where I stood, I made for it, and on my arrival found a very intelligent settler, from a half hours ramble with whom I obtained the following particulars.

The valley, which was seven miles long, and from two to five broad, was called *Coonandanaga*, an Indian term, signifying the woody lake. It was watered by the creek in every direction, having a course beating from one side to the other till it issued where I had left the boat. This creek has a great advantage over that I have just mentioned on the opposite side, for, having a rapid descent from its fountain, it serves two capital mills which work at seasons when the water of others is entirely consumed. The great western road passes through this valley, and is at times so miry and bad, that the mail coach has been known to pass through it with difficulty in an entire day. The soil is immensely deep and nearly as black as coal. The timber is not near so large or so old as that of the dry lake, and a variety of other testimony rushes on the mind to prove that the waters of this former lake had remained many cen-

turies after those of the other had passed away. The wood is not the growth of many ages; the soil is not changed by exposure to external air, and much of the land is but now rising out of submergement, to receive the influence of the wind and sun. The mountains encircling this spot are not quite so elevated as those around the dry lake. Those on the north-west side are the highest, which accounts in some degree for the waters forcing a passage to the south-east. The real bed of Coonanadanga is limestone rock, similar to that of the river and the dry lake. From consequences to be deduced from these facts; from numerous other seats of lakes known in the country, and from the number of plains and bottoms which every where abound, formed, evidently, on the retreat of water, and composed of vegetable and animal substances of every description, it is manifest that the whole scope of country from

above a range of mountains which cross the river somewhere below the falls, as high up as Pittsburg, and border Lake Eric, once formed an immense chain of lakes. The continued and remitting industry of water to find a level to the sea; the constant though gradual waste by attrition, or a convulsion of nature which rent every barrier to its base, at length let loose the waters; drained the lakes, and the floods, entering from all parts of the higher to the lower grounds formed the bed of the river now called Ohio. Till persons of a better information disprove this—such shall remain my decided opinion.

As the first settlement of Coonandanaga embraces the history of many settlements in this part of the globe, I give it you nearly in the words of my informer.

Near ten years have elapsed since the dæmon of revolution had overthrown

some of the best governments in Europe, and shed the baneful seeds of dissention and anarchy over the surface of the eastern world.—The Irish, those unsophisticated children of nature, were the first to encourage principles, which they were instructed to believe to be alone compatible with the rights and the dignity of man. They were taught to consider the throne and the altar as the mere instruments of national subservion, and morals and laws as nothing more than unreasonable shackles, fit only to restrain the mental and physical energies of bondsmen and slaves. It is not to be wondered at, that a people abandoned to an instruction of this kind, and what is worse, abandoned by the intelligent of their own community, who reside in great towns, or for the most part abroad should imagine themselves aggrieved, and proceed to measures presumed necessary to the promotion of

public happiness, and the security of a general and individual liberty. In adopting these criminal measures for the purpose of correcting visionary ills, they incurred the displeasure of government; many expiated their offences on the scaffold, and others crossed the most distant seas.

In the autumn of 1798, several thousands left Ireland, buoyed up with a hope, that having escaped from the land of tyranny, they would be received in America, with the acclamation of joy, or the sensibility of fraternal tears. At the period of their arrival, America was but regurgerating her own rebels, and saw with alarm the superfluity of other nations thrown into her bosom. Besides, as these unfortunate Irish generally came in ships crowded with from three to five hundred each, and furnished with provision unhealthy and scanty, they consequently arrived in a shocking state, and

had to be succoured by individuals, or taken into public hospitals.

Independently then of the dislike the American government began to entertain to the importation of rebel and disaffected doctrines, they saw a serious danger in receiving such a number at a time of sickly and wretched objects, who for want of means, character, and health, could not be able to assist themselves, and therefore should become a burden to the state: they remonstrated with the cabinet at St. James's, and that court decreed that no legal banishments should be made to America.

The ship in which my informer, Mr. Fitzpatrick came, left Cork for Philadelphia, with two hundred emigrants; in consequence of being stifled in the hold, want of provision and water, seventy-six died, and were cast overboard; on her arrival at Willmington, on the the Delaware, eighty-seven more were

received into the hospital, and the remaining thirty-seven walked on to Philadelphia, there to beg the streets. A few of these were advised to go to the city of Washington in search of work; a few more died of want, contagion, and misery, while Fitzpatrick, and fifteen followers, aided by a small sum of money, clothes, and instruments of husbandry, generously made up for them by a society of Irishmen in Philadelphia, set off for the western country, and arrived at Coonandanaga, where they determined to stop. The vicinity of the vale to the main water; the great utility of a creek commanding a fall of thirty feet in less than one mile, and the light manner in which they found the land timbered, were the motives for this preference. The land itself was not at first much esteemed by these settlers. Black and mixed with roots and other deleterious substances, they feared it

might be similar to the bogs of their own country, which yielded nothing but moss, heath, rushes, and flags, and refused melioration even from the severest industry. A little observation proved the fallacy of their ideas on this head. They located the valley the first season, cleared about five acres of ground each, and planted Indian corn, cabbage, and a few potatoes. These throve to such an astonishing degree, that more land was joyfully cleared for the following year, planted in like manner, and that of the former season reserved for wheat. Owing to the extreme richness of the soil, the wheat crop failed: it ran up to stalk above seven feet high, and bore little or no corn. Having been since reduced by several successive heavy crops of Indian corn, it begins to bear wheat in considerable perfection, though it still rambles much above the reapers head. The cabbages grow to a great

size, yet are not of a permanent utility, in consequence of their being overrun, eaten, or perforated by millions of insects, before they can in any quantity be brought into use and laid by as a winter provision. The potatoes are large, spungy, and wet.

The houses of the settlement are built with much comfort and neatness. Though scattered through the vale, the settlers have the good sense to unite on all occasions which require the power of many hands. Hence buildings for residence and convenience, clearing land, and rolling ponderous and heavy logs, are effected in a proper and speedy manner, without consuming the health and wasting the time of a poor individual, who, had he the whole to compleat through his own means and industry, would droop or sink under the task before it was a tenth part compleated.

I met with nothing so sensible and so

judicious as this little republic since I crossed the mountains. The members of it atone, by a regulated and laborious life, for the political sins they committed. I attribute the wisdom of this conduct and the prudence of these resolutions to the council and example of their leader, Mr. Fitzpatrick, whom the governor of the state has chosen as the Justice of their district, and whom they themselves have elected as their minister and teacher. Mr. F. joins to a good natural understanding, corrected and improved by adversity, an excellent heart and a mind formed to impress on others a love of virtue and morality. On conversing with him some time, I ceased to wonder at the account he gave me of himself and associates. So true it is that the example of wisdom and goodness is captivating; that it shines out in the actions and countenances of those who practice them; reforms folly and vice,

and spreads its influence over the untutored residents of the most untutored wilderness. I could not help loving this good man, and of sincerely wishing that all misguided emigrants, on abandoning their country and their homes, might choose such a character for their leader.

Having learned his different functions, I was desirous of knowing where they were exercised, and asked him accordingly. The boys and the children, replied Mr. F. meet me at the mill on the afternoon of every Sunday. We there administer the little justice that is wanted among us, say a few prayers, and then make a hurling match in the manner of *our own* country. But if any of the boys be absent, from sickness, the hurling match cannot go on, as we have agreed among ourselves to visit any sick neighbour on Sunday, see that he want for nothing, and, if his indisposition con-

tinue, look after his stock, get his harvest in, and repair his house against the rigour of winter!

I would not injure the beauty and excellence of this little narrative by any remark, were there not a few words employed in it that may not, according to their spirit, be exactly understood.

When Mr. F. says "the boys and the children," he means his old companions and their families, and uses the other apparently unappropriate word as a term of familiarity and endearment, becoming in him as their leader, pastor, and friend. The next expression, "our own country," is more peculiar to the Irish than to any other emigrant whatever, and does them much honor. The longer they reside abroad the more the attachment to their "own country" encreases. Even those whom the law rejected, and others who left their homes under the most violent prejudices of a

deluded misconception and heated mind, are the first to talk of their "own country," its pleasant hills, green fields, and temperate and happy climate. Their pastime, and their songs too, are national, and their conversation in general, commence how they may, end in tradition and legendary tale.—Convinced of this, you will not be surprised to hear that very few Irish alienate their political rights, by swearing allegiance to other powers, notwithstanding their casting off responsibility to their own state. At least there is hardly one Irish subject in this part of the world who has become an American citizen, and certainly not even one who thinks so little of his "own country," as to set on that title any manner of consideration or respectful consequence.

The last phrase I shall elucidate in Mr. F's simple narrative is, "and repair his house against the rigours of

winter." In this country in general, most all settlers houses are built of logs, between which there are large interstices, which require to be filled with well tempered clay. Where good clay can be produced this filling up remains permanent, but where mould or black earth is employed, as a substitute, the heat of summer crumbles it to dust, and the winds blow it through the whole of the apartment. For the want of clay the houses of Coonandanega were therefore every summer reduced to a mere shed, through which the element took an uncontrouled range, and were it not for the admirable regulation of these associated emigrants, " to repair a sick man's house against the rigours of winter," his disorder would naturally increase, or he would perish from neglect and inclemency.

Three or four of the original settlers are dead, and all the rest have past through the dangerous ordeal of a seasoning.

that is, they were from time to time reduced to death's door, and recovered, with the blood so thinned, and constitution so altered, that the climate cannot act upon it with the same violence it exercises on a virgin subject. It is necessary only to add, that these poor settlers were as happy as a people could be, who had left their own green fields for teeming swamps and burning hills; and who had left a clear and healthy sky, for an atmosphere surcharged, at one time, with sulphurous clouds and fætid fogs, and at another, with all the putrid and fiery particles of death. They also had to pine for the absence of the sun a great portion of the year. In winter he seldom entirely dispersed the vapour which lay densed on the place, and in summer his visits were uncertain and transient.

You may ask how a valley can at times be so unsufferably hot which is exposed

to so little action of the sun. In Europe you seek the shade and the covert of groves as a shield against heat. Here the very reverse is practised. The open plain, the tops of hills, alone can be endured. Protected valleys and immense woods are found to contain a heat so pestilential, that man and beast abandon them during the fervor of the day, and seek for situations to which the air has access. In extensive dense wildernesses, and in the bosom of vales surrounded by mountains and woods, the air of summer completely stagnates, and remains unruffled, though that of open plains and summits is in continual agitation and perpetually renewed. There is nothing more common here than to hear it said "it is now too hot to work in the woods," which is saying, it is better to work in the open air, though exposed to all the ardour and violence of the sun.

I returned to my boat, accompanied

by Mr. F. and several of his children, one of which was loaded with a basket, which his father, when at a distance from me instructed him to bring from his house. I did not return but chose to follow the creek in order to observe the characters of the passage in the mountain which allowed the former waters and the present stream to become tributaries to the river and the sea. Mr. F. no sooner observed the subject of my speculation, than he informed me that he and his friends had no manner of doubt but that they had settled "in the bottom of a lake." "Look," said he, "at the upper part of the opening how it has been torn asunder by some earthquake, and the under parts for the matter of twenty feet seem carried away by the constant current of the waters." The appeal was strong, the facts evident and unequivocal. I had nothing more to do than to gain my boat, where the children had arrived

before me, and spread on a table the contents of the basket. It consisted of a wild turkey, some fresh butter, and a loaf of Indian bread. "I thought," said Fitzpatrick, "before I put the blessing of God on your honor, I would take care your honor had something to eat." I made no reply to this. Mindeth understood me. He put a bottle of rum, some powder and lead into the basket; strung some Indian ornaments round the childrens necks, and without further ceremony hastened the whole party ashore. He then poled the boat out of the creek on which we all took to our stations and gained the true current in a few strokes of the oars.

The true current is on the Virginia side. On bearing across, I could just perceive below Wheeling, the remains of an old fort standing on the point of land formed by the junction of Big Wheeling creek and the Ohio river.

If I except the very extraordinary beauty of the river, its islands, bays, indentions, elevated, and, in many places, cultivated banks, adorned by houses, and resounding with the varied noise of social and busy life, nothing else occurred to me during the day particularly worthy your attention; for I am well persuaded you do not expect a descriptive voyage down a river to consist of every fine view, or to pourtray every striking prospect, bend, turn, or aspect which it is susceptible of assuming. What in truth is more tiresome than a continued strain of luxuriance of mountains' crowned tops, of hills' varigated pride, enamelled meads, meandering streams, dashing cataracts, and falling floods? I proceed then in the manner I originally made you to expect, that is to give thoughts, observations, and occurrences as occasions and circumstances demand, without forcing them from objects fatiguing to dwell upon and useless to recount.

It would be unpardonable, however, to omit mentioning a place I arrived at in the evening. It is called Long Reach, is forty-seven miles from Wheeling, and is eighteen miles long. Having arrived there rather late at night, and being somewhat intimidated by the majestic appearance of the river, I resolved to remain till morning, make fast to shore, and encamp after the manner of my proceeding at Grape Island. This occupied no great time; a good fire was lighted, the Coonandanaga turkey prepared, and supper and refreshment spread under the lengthened gloom of a large walnut-tree. Something recruited by such excellent refreshment, I took a solitary walk along the shore, and could not avoid remarking, the extraordinary difference which the arrival of two or three poor individuals could effect over an immense region of forest. On our first arrival, a silence almost

terrific and certainly awful, reigned through the woods. The hour was too early for beasts to prowl, and too late for birds to sing. Nature seemed to enjoy a calm, but to us gave a painful repose. Whereas, now the noise of our axe was returned from afar, the voice of labor reviberated in our ear, the smoke rose to the sky, and the vivid flames of the fire shed a blaze of comfort around, relieved the solemnity of the scene, and spread a golden radiance over the surface of the water. I was drawn from this meditation by Cuff, (whose best talent, I find, to consist in a propensity to imitate wild beasts, and who professes to howl like a wolf better than any of his nation) he had just begun a *solo* so exquisite in judgment, so correct in expression, and so natural in cadence, that the very dæmons of the woods awoke, and joined him in horrid chorus. Fearful his imitative powers might in-

vite some unwelcome visitors to the neighbourhood of my camp, I begged of him to suppress his propensity till less danger should be apprehended from its exercise. He told me, what I indeed knew, that where there was fire, there was no danger; that if I would let him go into the wood with my gun, he would cry like a young opossum, and bring me a wolf or a bear in half an hour. Though convinced of his capacity, and the little difficulty he had to personify a brute, I declined his intimation, but told him, if he wished to amuse himself, he might sit on the stern of the boat, while I took a glass of grog at the fire; and, in a low voice, give me specimens of all the languages he had acquired in his early intimacies with the inhabitants of the woods. Quite pleased with the serious manner I addressed him, and delighted with the term " Language," which I gave his

art, he took his station, and asked me what he should begin with; whether he was to lure or to alarm? I told him first to lure and then to alarm, by way of safety for the night. On hearing this, Mindeth stepped into the boat, took some arms, and silently placed himself beside. Cuff began. I must do him the justice to acknowledge, that never was man more perfect, more inimitable in this profession, this science, for which the world yet wants a name. He passed through all the varied modulations between infancy and old age; between a fawn and an elk; between a young calf and a buffalo bull. The beasts of the forest were deceived. Much commotion ensued. The stir and agitation approached. Mindeth fired a gun and renewed his fire. Cuff next began to alarm. Savage must that beast have been, into which such cries did not strike fear. From the malig-

nant yell of the tyger cat, up to the panther's bloody roar; the wolf's howl and the bear's rugged voice; all were heard, and all gave alarm. He ceased. A universal cry was uttered through the woods, which struck the Virginia shore, beat against the opposite hills, and at length died in the distant windings of the water.

I rewarded this extraordinary talent with a bumper of spirits, and asked if all the people of his nation were as *learned* as himself, or much versed in his accomplishments; he replied, that by this time he expected they were much more so, for that they could continue to improve; while he, from residing long among the whites, had not only *not* learned any thing, but *lost* much of the information he originally possessed. He formerly could imitate birds, gobble like a turkey, and crow like a cock; but now he does not know whether he

could enveigle birds by these arts, or lure foxes and racoons to approach a snare or a trap. Yet he hoped to be exercised on the way and to recover his usual powers. Such is this poor fellow. Though he came to me without any character whatever, except the vague one, " of knowing something of the waters," I begin to think him a great acquisition, and shall afford him every possible opportunity of following his propensity, and improving his voice. I have just instructed him to crow in the morning like a cock, in order to rouse up all hands. That I may obey the fellow's summons which I have no doubt will be given, I hastily wish you a good night, and leave my intended description to my next. This fellow's nonsense has put every sublime idea out of my head.

LETTER XIII.

Fogs—night and day currents, their variation, advantages and disadvantages—Indian practical philosophy—a sublime prospect—an interesting breakfast—settlement of the banks of Long Reach—description of them—passage to Marietta—a dangerous fall—Little Muskingham River—Marietta, a flourishing town deserted—ship building and commercial enterprize—has the only church from Pittsburg, one hundred and eighty miles distant—the laws strictly enforced—its tradesmen, generals, colonels, majors, &c.

Marietta, State of Ohio, May, 1806.

I WAS roused at a very early hour by the *Mandau Chanticlier*, but as the fog was not off the waters, I deferred my departure till it was in some degree dispersed by the solar rays. I have known the fog remain till twelve at

noon, and even for two or three hours after. At such times, the navigation is more dangerous than on the darkest night. The channel, islands, rocks, ripples, snags, sawyers, and a variety of other dangers, are not visible. The true channel cannot be seen, nor the true current observed; and, possibly, owing to the density of the atmosphere, the noise of the waters beating against objects necessarily to be avoided, remains drowned and unheard. I might with truth remark, that navigating at night is, in many respects, safer than in a foggy day. For at night the noise of water in falls and ripples, and against rocks and impediments, is heard at a much greater distance than it is on the finest day, much less on one, when sound would be retarded by vapour and corrupted air. I have heard the water roar on a fine night to such a degree, as to impose a belief that I was immedi-

ately approaching a dreadful fall or tumbling cataract. After running two hours, nearly ten miles, with the utmost precaution and constant look out, I found the terrific noise to proceed from the current dashing through the top of a tree, whose root had got fast near the bed of the stream. In the day I have often seen a large tree almost erect, and in a similar situation; but the noise the passing water made over it was only to be heard when close at hand. These facts, though I do not presume to account for them, are equally singular and fortunate: at night the navigator is warned of danger he cannot see: in the day he beholds a danger which cannot be heard. There are, however, two alarming peculiarities belonging to the night which should not go unnoticed. 1st. The current differs considerably in character from the current of the day. In the day its breadth is contracted,

often to within the width of the boat, or less; and it delights in holding a favorite shore—so much so, that it is difficult to steer clear of the bank, which, after caressing some hours, it hastily abandons, makes nearly across, as if to enjoy, for a certain time, the beauties of the opposite shore.—In the night the current diffuses itself more generally—spreads out, and finally reaches the middle of the river, where it maintains itself with grace and majesty till the morning, when it contracts in sphere, increases in power, and alternately visits either bank. Were there no obstacles in the middle of the river, this circumstance of a nocturnal current, varying from the daily channel to the centre, would be highly favorable; but as islands and sand bars every three or four hours occur, it becomes dangerous. I must confess my ignorance of the latent principle which occasions the

variation of current. My loose opinion on the subject is derived from observing, that in the day, the air, *nearly always*, has an inclination to come up the river, or to traverse it from side to side: and its action is also so high as to be seen on the leaves of the trees when the surface of the water is entirely unruffled. Whereas, at night, as the inclination of the air is always down the river, when unaffected by storms; and as the volume, density and weight of the air, are augmented to an incalculable degree, by the absence of the sun and the descent of his exhalations, it may be presumed, that these great changes in the direction and power of the atmosphere may operate a change on the current of the waters. The more so as it is known that the air and body of vapour, rejected by the sky after the setting of the sun, seek for the centre of rivers and the sinuosities occasioned

by valleys or creeks. This body of air then, of power, course and volume, so superior and contrary to that of the day, pressing on the centre of the river, either causes there an additional current, or, by some secret law of attraction, draws the current of the day from the side to the centre. I find the observation made by all navigators to be, that a boat makes *much* more way at night, than in the day; and that it holds the middle of the river. You perceive, by this, that I am supported in my fact, but I have never met with any one who could assist me to its elucidation. As to a boat's going faster at night, I am not quite so much at a loss for an argument; having on her an encreased weight of atmosphere, and a course of air not running in opposition to the water, she must proceed with more velocity than when the sun deprives her of this pressure, and, by shifting the action

of the air gives her a contrary impetus. But why a boat holds the middle of the river at night, in an apparent current whose principle is dissipated on the return of day, I cannot determine; and what I have said, you are to consider as loose hints, and not as the result of systematic and philosophical opinion.

The second alarming peculiarity belonging to nocturnal navigation, is in the falsity of vision, and in the little dependence which can be placed on the judgment in regard to the distance, character, extent, and even nature of objects. I have heard of a man, who ran his boat on the point of an island, mistaking it for an object, which, for upwards of an hour before, he had imagined floating before him. And, more than once, on hearing the roaring of water, or apprehending some other danger below me, I have dropped down six miles while pulling for safety

into a shore on which I thought I could have cast a biscuit when I first began to work across the stream. At other times I have been greatly deceived, on making land at night, as to my opinion of the nearest bank, after taking the nearest for the most distant; and after, on preferring the most distant, I have run the boat's head against a bank I calculated far from me. My poor Mandanian, Cuff, whom I have more than once introduced to you, seeing me perplexed at a moment of expected danger, to know what shore to pull to, jumped on the roof of the boat, and giving it a sudden stroke with an oar, listened to the returning sound. The left shore first repeated the stroke; and next, after a small interval, the right. "The left shore," said Cuff, with a modest confidence, "is but three hundred yards, and the right a mile from us." He was perfectly correct; I was grate-

ful to him for his instruction, nor could I check an idea, that the whites theorise on philosophy, while it is practised by the Indian: neither could I resist looking for further instruction; and asking him, whether his rule held good on all occasions? he replied, as I might well have conceived, " It did not: that the echo in some few parts of the river never answered at all; and, that in damp or rainy weather, it also failed telling which was the nearest side." I am confident, that in general, the rule is good and beneficial. So much for a digression: it is surely time to proceed.

It was eight o'clock in the morning before the fog began to disperse in a sufficient degree to encourage my departure with safety. I then began to form some idea of my situation and of the view before me. To do this with the more precission I paddled my canoe

into the middle of the river, first sending the boat on before me, directing her to keep the right bank, and to look well out. I no sooner gained the centre, than I perceived that the part of the river I occupied was about a mile broad, bounded with high hills, crowned with sumptuous trees, and the banks decorated with the most beautiful flowers. I could with difficulty make these few observations before my canoe drifted into the part called the commencement of the *Long Reach*, on which the river appeared metamorphosed, as if by enchantment: it became not less than three miles wide; the mountains bended off to the right and left, and subsided into fine wooded ground, and an object like a man of war in full sail, moved majestically in the centre. This very interesting vision arose from the looming of an island directly before me, and in the timbers of which, some reluctant

fog was yet lurking. I worked to the left shore, and had an uninterrupted view down the *Long Reach* to its extremity, where it appeared bounded by a mountain of extraordinary height. In the middle was a chain of islands which divided this lovely portion of the river into two channels of unparallelled beauty and exactitude. The right-hand channel in particular, which is considebly the best, is straight as an artificial canal, deep as a lake, and smooth as glass. I crossed over to it between the extremities of the first and second island, and on entering it could see through the vista, formed by the narrow part of the river which concludes the long reach, a distance of eighteen miles.

The banks being comparatively low, are settled by many families, who build their houses and cultivate their lands in such a manner as to contribute vastly to the general interest of the scene. Corn-

fields, pasture-grounds, herds of cattle, ascending smoke, the voice of man, and the varied noise of domestic animals, relieved my thoughts from the overwhelming impression they at first received, on the observance of nature in a character so new and inexpressibly sublime. Happy to have an opportunity of unbending my mind after such solitude, admiration, and reflection, I paddled down the stream, passed my boat which was proceeding at between three and four miles an hour, and dropped down to a house which had a neat appearance, and a something which indicated comfort.—I drew my canoe up the bank, went to the house, and soon discovered I was not very wide in my judgment. A clean and orderly looking family sat at a breakfast composed of maiz and milk. "Good morrow, stranger," (was uttered involuntarily by all) "how fares it?" continued

an old man, " have you broke your fast this morning? if not, we have but just sat down." I made little other reply than, that of drawing a stool, sitting to table, and helping myself very plentifully in a cedar bowl handed me by one of the family. When it was perceived that my appetite was somewhat appeased, by the sweetest breakfast I think I ever ate in my life, the usual questions were put to me; but not put in the impertinent and intrusive way of the eastern states, to discover the extent of one's property and private views, but merely as a species of chit chat, or sort of rural good breeding, to engage attention, pass time, and divert the mind. I said the usual questions, presuming you know they consist of How goes it, stranger? Where are you bound? Are you from the old country? What part? &c. Having answered these inoffensive questions as much to their satisfaction

as my time would permit, I, in my turn reversed the tables, and poured in my regular series of queries, which produced the following few remarks.

The banks of Long Reach were partially settled in consequeuce of the excellence of the land and the retreat of the mountains into the back country, leaving several fine plains of five miles extent, running to the water; whereas on most other parts of the river, the mountains bound the water board so close, that there is seldom sufficient left for the purposes of improvements and agriculture on a large scale; if bottoms be excepted, which sometimes contain several thousand acres, but they are for the most part unhealthy, having no vent towards the adjacent country, and being formed of decayed vegetable and other substances, as well as being subject to occasional inundations. The climate of Long Reach has been another motive of pre

ference. It is supposed cooler in summer in consequence of its being more exposed and open than other parts, and more temperate in winter than places where hills and mountains attract rain and cold from the clouds. An extraordinary proof of some difference existing in the climate is, that there are trees and shrubs now growing in the islands and on the bank of Long Reach, which are only found three hundred miles above and two hundred below it. Of the three islands in the Reach, one of them produces little else than fir or pine, which flourishes in great perfection, though no other island in the river furnishes a single stick of it, nor is any of such excellence nearer than the head waters of the Monongahela. The shrubs distinguishing the Reach, are the arbutus and the honey locust, neither of which are to be found above, though they grow lower down the river about two hundred miles. The crops

never fail, and yield more than four times the quantity known in the Atlantic States; but owing to the distance of the market, the imposition of the itinerent purchasers, and the low price and wretched articles they give for produce, the profits are inferior, and for a certain part of the produce, such as fruit, vegetables, and poultry, there is seldom any sale. The advantage these settlements enjoy over the Atlantic farms, is, that they require less labor, no manure, and lie adjacent to plenty of fish and game.

The reach (to use the old man's words) is moderate healthy. Fevers, however, are perfectly well known, and intermittents are annually heard of. On the whole, however, to come to some general conclusion, I think the Long Reach a very distinguished part of the Ohio; it is exposed to a free circulation of air; the shore is of a clean gravel; the banks are low without being swampy; the wood is

ornamental as well as useful, and fine rich plains extend to the mountains equal to the most extensive speculations in agricultural and rural pursuits. I venture to predict, that the Reach will one day become the seat of a great town: if that happen, the land will increase in estimation; at present it sells for but two dollars per acre, and that to be paid by four annual instalments!

My entertainers were Germans. We parted with many expressions of good will. The old man came down with me to my canoe, and when I had taken my seat and paddle, lanched me with a push into the stream. The day was calm, the sun shone hot, but I went with such rapidity down the current, that I felt sufficient air to give a tolerable coolness. It took me however two hours to recover my boat, which I at length moored ashore, and indeed, might have passed it, had my attention not been attracted by the

more than stentorian voice of Cuff, who hailed me with the cry of "Sago! Sago! Master." Owing to the great taciturnity of the Indians, they make particular words express a variety of sensations; hence the small word "Sago," implies joy and satisfaction at an unexpecting meeting. I pulled into shore, and enquiring the motives of the boat not continuing her course, found that my servant had got alarmed at the length of my stay, and perhaps his fears arose out of the dreadful stories told him by Cuff of the terrific nations who formerly lived on the borders of the Long Reach, and whose remains, if still in the neighbourhood, might take me prisoner, carry me to the woods, and, after certain scalpings and tortures, offer me up in sacrifice to the god of their fathers, and the spirit of the lakes. Having chid the one for telling such foolish stories, and the other for attending to them, we cast off the boat,

and being determined to reach Marietta that night, I took the helm, minutely observing the current and worked hard the oars. It is not a little singular that the *sorti* from the Long Reach exactly resembles the *entré.* On looking back the eighteen miles of the narrow passage of the river represents a vista, the tops of whose trees appear to join, and in looking forward, what exhibited a contracted but beautiful avenue at a distance, opens into the ordinary breadth of the river, which again becomes guarded by high mountains, immense rocks, and all the insignia peculiar to the water above Long Reach.

The water runs a mile an hour faster between the Reach and Marietta than it does in the Reach itself. This of course is to be attributed to the contraction of the current, and to a few ripples and islands in the way which force the stream into a small compass, and encrease its

action on bodies floating on its surface. I found I went between six and seven miles an hour in common; between eight and ten on passing particular points and islands. This gave me great hopes of arriving at an early hour. It was fortunate that I gave myself so much active occupation, for the river afforded few objects for the mental amusement.

The contraction of the river, the height of its boundaries crowned with stately trees, and the inaccessibility of its surface to the direct rays of light, give it a solemn and gloomy aspect, and this effect was considerably augmented by the consequent colour and depth of the water, which appeared in many places an abyss, black as Erebus. On passing through that portion of the river which inspires the most painful solemnty, I arrived at a chain of islands, called the Brothers, ran down the right hand channel, and on reaching the foot of the last

island, perceived a fall in the river, and that the current wore through it in the form of a Z. The channel was very little broader than the boat, confined between rocks, the slightest touch against which would dash her to pieces. I ordered the men to keep a steady stroke, not on any account to abandon the oars, or to be alarmed at the noise of flood. The boat instantly took the first suction of the fall, encreased in velocity to a great degree, passed through all the mazes of the channel till she came to the last descent, when tumbling, tost and regardless of her helm, she spun round and round, and at length shot ahead down the stream. Astonishing country! Here again the hills subsided, the force of nature smiled, the current diffused, and the river became a perfect calm. On looking back to contemplate the danger I had just escaped, I could but faintly see the foaming surge, or hear the horrid

clamour. I never experienced a more eventful moment than in the passage of that fall. Several times my steering-oar worked so hard as to pitch me nearly over board, and at one bend of the channel I bore so hard to port that I touched a rock, from which all my exertion could but barely wear the boat's head. I learned from the danger I there experienced, that I wanted another hand, whose office should be to stand at the head of the boat, and on approaching a rock, in the mazes of a fall, bear against it with a long pole and assist the helm when wearing round. I strongly recommend a fourth hand. Many of the accidents which occur in the river are owing to the want of a sufficient number to navigate boats. I have bought this correction from experience.

By seven o'clock in the evening, I reached a much wished for place, a river called the little Muskingum, which

I knew to be within six miles of Marietta. Having passed this small river which flows into the Ohio on the right hand side, and run down along an island, low, yet beautiful, called Durat's, and having reached its foot in one hour, I rowed hard across to the right, where I made fast under a high bank on which stood the flourishing town of Marietta.

Marietta is situated at the confluence of the Great Muskingum, a fine navigable river, with the Ohio. The progress of this town and the adjacent settlements was, for several years much impeded by Indian wars; but the town now bids fair to become a place of considerable importance, to which it is well entitled by the beauty of its situation as well as to its being inhabited by New-Englanders, who, notwithstanding the contraction of their habits and principles, it must be allowed are a people of uncommon industry and speculative enterprize.

The inhabitants of Marietta are among the first who have exported the produce of the Ohio country, in vessels of their own building. The first attempt was made a few springs ago with a brig about eighty tons burden, bound for Jamaica, and commanded by an old and well known mariner, commonly called "Commodore Whipple." The success which attended that voyage, has roused the spirit of enterprize among the wealthier class, so that there are now three vessels building, one of which is about two hundred and twenty tons, and several have gone off loaded since the first brig. Besides, an agentfrom the United States is now here contracting for the construction of several gun-boats to be completed by the insuing spring.

The town, consisting of about one hundred and sixty houses, frame and brick of the neatest workmanship; is seated on each side of the Muskingum, over which

there is a ferry. The site is a very fine plain, running about a mile from the Ohio to a very high chain of mountains which continue for upwards of thirty miles into the back country. The extent of these mountains, and the want of large tracts of good land in the immediate vicinity of the town must retard the population of the neighbourhood, and in fact hinder the place from ever attaining to a great degree of magnitude. Nor is the country at the back of these mountains healthy; several who retired behind these died of flux and fever, and several have returned sick and disgusted with the place, saying that it is all either mountain or swamp, till towards the sources of the Muskingum, where there is excellent land, but a climate too fatally unhealthy and the price of produce entirely too low.

Marietta is also a port town, issues a weekly paper, and possesses an acade-

my, court-house, prison, and church. The latter edifice is the only one of the kind between this and Pittsburgh; a distance of one hundred and eighty-one miles. If justice be impotent on the opposite Virginian shore, and morals and laws be trampled upon and despised, here they are strengthened by authority; and upheld, respected, and supported by all ranks. The New-England regulations of church and magistracy are all introduced and acted on to the full extent—to a point bordering on an arbitrary exaction. Every family, having children or not, must pay a certain annual sum for the support of a public school: every person, whether religious or otherwise, must pay a fixed sum towards the maintainance of a minister of divine worship; and all persons must pay a rigid respect, and a decided observance to the moral and religious ordinances of the sabbath. In

consequence never was town more orderly or quiet. No mobs, no fighting, no racing, no *rough and tumbling*, or any thing to be observed but industry, and a persevering application to *individual* views. The Virginians, who at times visit the town, remain for a short period, and return to their own shores astonished at the municipal phenomena they witnessed, and wondering how man could think of imposing on himself such restraints.

As I before observed, the original settlers of this town and neighbourhood were New-Englanders, and many of them old continental officers, and officers who remained in the country after the Indian war. Some few of them still live; but in situations very different from their former ones. This leads a stranger into a variety of error and misconception. Yesterday I was speaking rather harshly to a man who had not

fulfilled an agreement with me to caulk my boat, when a gentleman came up and accosted him with "Ah! General, how do you? I mean to dine with you. What's your hour?" I made use of this opportunity to go on to the baker in pursuit of some biscuit. I found him at home. On seeing the bread I began to comment on the price and quality, and might have betrayed some little dissatisfaction and incivility, had not a third person entered opportunely to say, "Colonel, I want a loaf of bread." My next call was on a butcher, whose sorry dirty looking meat made me neglectful of my late experience, and I raved without any consideration of propriety and decorum, till brought to a sense of misconduct and absence of breeding by a negro, who, taking me aside, very kindly warned me that the *butcher* was a *judge*, and that he could fine folks for cursing and swearing.

Hemmed in on every side, I resolved to mend my manners and gain some instruction on the subject. I consulted my landlord, whom I found to be also a major of the late army. His lessons were short. "We majors, colonels, and generals," said he, "are so cheap and common here, that people don't mind us *no more than nothing*." Do you follow their example: live without constraint, and get your business done as though you were dealing with knaves, and the most common race of men. Our title signifies but little. For the most part it is used towards us from familiarity, derision and contempt. Those who *really* respect us, say, Tom, Dick, or whatever else we may be called." But the judge, said I, how is he to be treated? "When in his character of butcher," said the major, "he is treated rough enough, and without any ceremony; but when in court, and

sometimes on Sundays, the citizens say, "Your honor," and touch their hat!

As I propose writing again from this place, I may now conclude, not without an apprehension that my letter has already attained a tiresome and immoderate length.

LETTER XIV.

Marietta—an inundation—Fort Harmer—Indian antiquities—Be a lover of truth—*the axiom of the Western world—Indian tradition—an anecdote—an excursion—the Muskinghum river—a prospect—discovery of a vault—a beautiful tesselated pavemen and other remarkable remains of Indian antiquity—large human skeleton and other curious antiques—the depository of the remains af a chief in ancient times—the author's remarks on these remains of antiquity—predelection of the Indians for tall and robust chiefs—wild turkeys.*

Marietta, June, 1806.

I MENTIONED in my last, that this town is built on a very high plain, inclined to the mountain, and that the part of the bank on which it more immediately stands, is near sixty feet above the surface of low water. I should have been satisfied that the situation was admirably calculated for the comfort and health of the inhabitants, and would possibly have recommended it as the best site I had yet seen for a city, had I not perceived, while at breakfast this morning, that the parlour in which I sat, was distinctly marked all round with a water-mark from seven to eight inches high. As I could by no means admit the idea of inundation, I could in no manner account for the appearance, and was compelled to seek information from others. I give you the result of my enquiries.

In the spring of 1805, the Ohio and the Muskingum rose at the same time to a more than ordinary height. The first flowed in a volume so impetuous across the mouth of the latter, that it entirely stopped its course, and forced a return of the water by the revolving instrument of a newly-created counter-current. The Ohio remaining for near six weeks as a strong wall and rampart against the mouth of the Muskingum, caused that rivers's waters at length *to back* and multiply to such a degree, that they overflowed its banks, and inundated every plain to which it could gain access. This inundation being obstructed by the mountain in the rear of Marietta, was thrown towards the Ohio, and taking Marietta in its course, did great injury to the town; destroyed gardens and fences; carried off several frame-houses not firmly attached to the ground, and swept away

every loose object, and every living thing not endowed with the faculty of holding on, and of consulting the best means of self-preservation. The flood descending rapidly into the Ohio, did her bank considerable injury; wore it into canals and gullies, and abridged the quay and promenade of the inhabitants. I consider this event as very alarming: its recurrence may, in some future period, with redoubled force, bear off the town and bank, "leaving not a wreck behind."

Fort Harmer, erected by the Americans when subjugating the Indians, is situated on the Muskingum, opposite to this town; and the town itself has in its centre, the remains of an old Log-Guard, built at the same time, and for similar purposes.

Whoever delights in Indian antiquity, should explore this neighbourhood; and give the world some minute and histori-

cal sketches of the variety of its remains, said to consist of camps, forts, burial-grounds, &c. &c. As this must be a work of time connected with much perseverance, erudition, and interest, it is entirely out of my province; and I must leave it to those whose curiosity, leisure, and intelligence, may concur to induce them to make such interesting researches. Notwithstanding, I could not leave the place without taking a ramble to the spots where by tradition, the monuments of Indian antiquity were said to abound:—the places pointed at, were the banks, hills, and head waters of the Muskinghum. You may be surprised to find me put so much faith in tradition, which you may conceive to be nothing more than fables founded on superstition, and clothed in the garb of an obscure mystery, calculated to deceive and mislead the multitude, with the view of working on their

passions; and reducing them to an observance of certain rites, habits, and moral or religious institutions. This definition may apply to the traditions of the Eastearn, but not to those of the Western world. Of the few axioms which compose the system of savage instruction, this is the principal, "*Be a lover of Truth.*" It is natural then to believe, that the traditions of a people so instructed should be grounded on a fact, and though that fact might be disguised by embellishment, and strained by fancy, its immutability remains inviolate and continues for ever the same. I am strengthened in these opinions, by the following anecdote which, also proves, that a geographical accuracy exists in tradition equal to the most historical guide.

A barrow of considerable extent and magnitude exists in a remote part of Virginia, and several miles distant from

any public road. That portion of the country was formerly the property of a nation of Indians, who, driven from their possesions, crossed the mountains, descended towards "the land of the sleeping sun," and finally pitched their tents in the plains of Indiana, where the Great Spirit was often known to dwell, and to interpose his strength in favor of the unhappy.

After a lapse of eighty years of continued sufferings and adversity; after the conclusion of the Indian war, carried on by the States, with the design to annihilate the Indian name and power, a party of the descendents of this nation proceeded through Virginia with an interpreter, to Congress, in order to demand their rights, or to sue for a remuneration of those so unjustly violated, and torn from them. On coming into the latitude of the barrow of their ancestors, where were deposited

" the bones of their fathers," they struck to it directly through the woods, without any instructions or enquiry; and having staid about it some time, with expressions which were construed to be those of sorrow, they returned to the high road, which they had purposely left for several miles, to pay this solemn and pious visit, and then pursued their journey.

Can you now deny some degree of belief to Indian tradition? Surely this anecdote is of the finest interest, and induces the mind, not only to belief, but to admiration; and to every sentiment which distinguishes the moral and human part of the world.

Having made arrangements for an absence of a few days, I provided myself with an excellent tinder-box, some biscuit and salt, (articles absolutely necessary to an explorer) and arming Cuff with a good axe and rifle, taking

myself a fowling-piece oft tried, and followed by a faithful dog, I crossed the ferry of the Muskingum, having learned that the left-hand side of that river was the most accessible, and the most abundant in the curiosities and other objects of my research. The Muskingum is two hundred and eighty yards wide at its mouth, and two hundred yards at the lower Indian towns, one hundred and fifty miles upwards. It is navigable for small batteaux, to within one mile of a navigable part of Cayahoga River, which runs into Lake Eric.

On traversing the valley between Fort Harmer and the mountains, I determined to take the high grounds, and after some difficulty ascended an eminence which commanded a view in one direction from off the river into the Ohio; in another up the river a few miles and over a large tract of hilly back country;

and, nearly directly across the Muskinghum could be seen Marietta; her gardens, poplar trees, ship yards, public buildings, and her highly cultivated plains; extending in a narrow breadth along the Ohio many interesting miles. After a very short inspection, and cursory examination, it was very evident that the spot on which I stood, had been occupied by the Indians, either as a place of observation or a strong hold. The exact summit of the hill I found to be artificial: it expressed an oval (agreeing with the natural form of the foundation) forty-five feet by twenty-three, and was composed apparently of earth and stone, though no stone of a similar character appeared near. The base of the oval was girded by a wall in a state of too great decay to justify any calculation; and the whole was so covered with heavy timber, and a bed of such thick bars, that I despaired of gaining

any farther knowledge, and would have instantly left the place, had I not been detained by Cuff, whom I saw occupied in endeavouring to introduce a pole in a small opening between two flags near the root of a tree which grew on the crown of the oval or summit of the hill. He told me he was sure that he had found the burrow of a ground-hog, or rattle-snake's nest, and as I had brought no provision but biscuit, it might be well to look out for supper in time. Though this fare was not of a very inviting nature, or consistent with my feelings and habits, I gratified the fellow's whim, and assisted him to remove, first, all the leaves and rubbish, and next the large stones, under which we expected to find a litter of wild pigs, or a nest of rattle-snakelings.

The flags were too heavy to be removed by the mere power of hands. Two good oak poles were cut in lieu of

leavers and crows. Clapping these into the orifice first discovered, we weighed a large flag stone, and on tilting it over, we each assumed a guard, and waited a few moments, in silent expectation of hearing the hissing of vermin, or the rustling of beasts. Nothing was heard. We resumed our labour, cast out a number of stones, leaves, and earth; and cleared a surface seven feet by five, which had been covered upwards of fifteen inches deep, with flat stones, principally, lying on each other with their edges pointing above the horizon. The surface we had cleared offered insuperable difficulties. It was a plain superficies composed of but three stones of such apparent magnitude, that Cuff began to think we should find under them neither snake nor wild hog. "If we look for supper under these stones," says my humble companion, "the moon will shine on an empty stomach,

and that is not lucky the first night of a voyage." Having once begun, I was not to be diverted from the task. Stimulated by obstruction, and animated by other views than hogs, snakes, and supper, I had made a couple of paddles of hickary shovels, and setting to work, undermined the surface; and, after much toil and exertion, slid the stones off, and laid the space open to my view. I expected to find a cavern. In fact, my imagination was warmed by a certain design, I thought I discovered. The manner the stones were placed led me to conceive the existence of a vault filled with the riches of antiquity, or crowded with the treasures of the most ancient world. A bed of sand was all that appeared under the flags I cast off, and as I knew sand not to be nearer than the bed of the Muskingum, a design was again so manifest as to encourage my proceeding, and the sand,

which was about a foot deep, was soon removed. The dsign and labour of man was now unequivocal. The space out of which these materials were taken, left a hollow in an oblong square, lined with stone on the ends and sides; and paved with square stones, on the apparent bottom or upper surface, exactly fitting together, in diameter about nine inches. I picked these up with the nicest care, and again came to a bed of sand, the removal of which left my vault, as it now evidently shewed itself, near three feet deep, presenting another bottom or surface composed of small square cut stones, fitted with such art, that I had much difficulty in discovering many of the places where they met. These displaced, I came to a substance, which, on the most critical examination, I judged to be a mat or mats in a state of entire decomposition and decay. Reverence and care encreasing with the progress already made, I took up

this impalpable powder with my hands, and fanned off the remaining dust with my hat. Great indeed was my recompence for this industry! Grand was the reward of my persevering labor and strengthened hopes! There appeared before me; there existed under my feet, a beautiful tessalated pavement of small coloured stones; the colors and stones arranged in such a manner as to express harmony and shades, and to pourtray the full-length figure of a warrior, under whose feet a snake was exhibited in ample folds. To tread on a pavement of such exquisite beauty and workmanship, formed by hands centuries ago, and by the ancestors of a race of people now rejected and despised, could not be done without an awful emotion.

Overcome by feelings I could neither combat or suppress, I remained for sometime silent and inactive, and at length

rose out of the vault to recover my usual energy and strength of mind. I had also spent the best part of the day; evening was fast approaching, and I had formed no plan for the accommodation of the night. I resolved to remain where I was. A good fire being made, I sent Cuff with the rifle into the woods, that is into a part which appeared likely to harbour wild turkeys, and directed him to *steer* for my fire on his return, and not to remain after the fall of night. Overjoyed at the prospect of his excursion, he had not left me two minutes before he commenced his notes. They at first appeared high and multifarious, or without any ultimate end, but before he had gone three hundred yards, they subsided into the proper modulation of a parent turkey calling around her tender young. From this he never varied while he could be heard.

Left to myself I felt more at liberty.

Like a miser, I wished, uninterrupted to examine my treasure. I again descended into the vault, occupied with the desire of being able to separate the pavement in such a manner, and to imprint on every stone such marks as would enable me to put it together at any future period, and bring it home for the advantage and delight of the curious world. I had made but very little progress before I discovered the impracticability of my intention. No part of the pavement was exactly of the tessalate character except the space between the outlines of the figures and the sides and ends of the entire space. The body of the figures was composed of dyed woods, bone, and a variety of small bits of terreous and testacious substances, most of which crumbled into dust on being removed and exposed to the open air. My regret and disappointment were very great, as I had flattered myself, that the whole was stone

and susceptible of being taken up in high preservation. Little more than the actual pavement could be preserved; it is composed of flat stones one inch deep, two inches square, and the prevailing colours are white, green, dark-blue, and pale spotted red: all of which are peculiar to the lakes and not to be had nearer. They are evidently known and filled with a precision which proves them to have been but from one common example. The whole was affixed in a thin layer of sand which covered a large piece of beech-bark in great decay, whose removal exposed what I was fully prepared to discover from all the previous indications, the remains of a human skeleton of uncommon magnitude, extended in a bark shell, which also contained, 1st. An earthen urn, or rather pot of earthen ware, in which were several small broken bones and some white sediment. The urn appears to be made of sand and flint,

vitrified, rings like a rummer glass, holds about two gallons, has a top or cover of the same material, and resists fire as completely as iron or brass. 2. A stone hatchet with a groove round the pole by which it was fastened with a withe to the handle. 3. Twenty-four arrow points made of flint and bone, and lying in a position which betrayed their having belonged to a quiver. 4. A quantity of beads, round, oval and square; coloured green, black, white, blue and yellow. 5. A conch shell decomposed into a substance like chalk. This shell is fourteen inches long and twenty-three in circumference: larger than any other I have seen or heard of the kind. 6. Under a heap of dust, and tenuous shreds of feathered cloth and hair, a parcel of brass rings cut, by an art unknown to me, out of a solid piece of that metal, and in such a manner that the rings are suspended from each other, without the

aid of solder or any other visible agency whatever. Each ring is three inches in diameter, and has an horizontal circumference half an inch wide, on both sides of which are strongly etched, a variety of characters resembling Chinese, the decyphering of which my scanty erudition has no pretentions to reach.

Of the skeleton I have preserved a small part of the vertebral column; a portion of the skull; a part of the under jaw inclosing two grinders of great size; the bones of the thighs and legs, and some melecarpi of the hands and feet. The ribs, clavicles, vertebræ of the neck and spine, &c. were nearly an impalpable powder, or entirely consum. Judging from comparison and analogy, the being to whom these remains belonged could not have been less than seven foot high. That he was a king, sachem or chief of a very remote period there can be no manner of doubt. The distinction, ingenuity,

labor, and care, with which he was buried, and the mausoleum constructed for him alone, on an eminence above the multitude, and its disregarded dead, proclaims this beyond dispute; and, from the subjects found in the interments, the following (at least, and perhaps many more) useful conclusions may be drawn. 1. The Indians of the most remote antiquity possessed the art of making potters' ware in a perfection unknown to the present times, in as much their's is light, strong, transparent, and capable of enduring fires. 2. It does not appear that they were acquainted with the use of iron when they employed stone hatchets and flint and bone arrow points. 3. That they had the science of impregnating stones, wood, and shells, with a variety of colours, is manifest from the pavement and beads and figures which have tints which we know they are by nature denied. 4. That they had a communica-

tion with the sea though distant from them two thousand miles, *or* that the sea was once more in their vicinity, is implied by the conch which contained a marine animal incapable of subsisting in any other than salt water. 5. The tenuous shreds of feathered cloth, worked on woven hair, announce some intercourse with South America, and a knowledge of its manufactures, as the feathers of the northern birds are not calculated for show, nor are any nations north of Mexico acquainted with their fabrication. 6. That they knew the use and properties of brass is very clear, and that they could work it with skill, is equally evident. 7. If the characters on the rings be in fact Chinese, or if they bear a strong and significant analogy to them, it again justifies a suspicion which formerly prevailed, that a communication early existed between Asia and America, since destroyed by some violent agitation of the earth

at the Straits of Bearing, or by a reverse of climate which renders that passage inaccessible, and too difficult and cold for the powers and temperament now accorded to man. 8. If the characters on the rings be original and unknown to any other of the nations of the earth, it must shew that the use of letters and the art of engraving were known to American tribes many ages since, and also prove that when we speak of America as a new country, on which science never shone, and in which social arts, agriculture and commerce, never flourished, we arrogate to ourselves more information than we are entitled to, and betray a presumption and ignorance for which we ought to blush. And 9. The remarkable size of the skeleton would signify that the Indians of every time were fond of associating in their chiefs, physical as well as mental endowments. That this king should unite a gigantic form to wisdom and intrepidi-

ty of heart appears to have been ever their favourite principle. Even the few scattered nations which still remain, and whose monarchs are elective, betray this passion in their choice, and pay much more deference to a prince of inordinate stature than to one of common magnitude. The present chief of the Osage, a warlike nation inhabiting the borders of the Missouri, is full seven feet high, and every way proportionate, a distinctive qualification well known of various other American chiefs. It is true, at the same time, that the principal of the great Miami tribe, living near the waters of Antaria, is a poor diminutive creature called by his people the "*Little Snake*," but his instance is a very honourable exception to a vulgar and general predeliction. The "Little Snake," during the Indian war, was the first in the council and second to none in the field. In proportion as he became terrible to

his enemies, he was the pride and praise of his friends: the title of the "Little Snake" (implying his wisdom and power to injure) was conferred upon him; he was unanimously elected chief, and the world had to witness the fine spectacle of several thousand Indians casting off their prejudices and doing homage to virtue and the endowments of the mind.

There is no doubt but that this monument and these remains merit a more ample speculation than I have afforded them. Perhaps my few remarks may suggest to you and others ideas of a happier and more material nature. If they cause a brighter caruscation of genius to break from minds of stronger cast than mine, or if they produce arguments and philosophy of a more judicious and less feeble character than themselves, formed as they were at the moment from the impulse of feelings and the tyranny of circumstance, I shall be content, and in

the place of imposing instruction, I shall be found solicitous to receive information.

I returned the particular objects nearly to their respective situations, and with the assistance of Cuff, who had but just returned, carried them in such a manner that they could not be injured by the weather or violated by other hands: it being my intention on my return down the river to secure them with care and take them into my boat.

Cuff had succeeded so well that he had great hopes his residence among Christians had not entirely obliterated his savage virtues. His imitative powers were still in such perfection that the wild turkeys acknowledged his voice, and the life of one of them paid for their credulity. He brought me a fine turkey of the last year, fat, and weighing about sixteen pounds. As the night was well set in and the day had been laborious, no time

was lost in preparing supper, that is in broiling a part of the turkey on some bright embers, and laying it on some green leaves before us, with some good biscuit and a bottle of water from an adjacent spring. I relished this primitive entertainment as well as any of the sumptuous banquets it has, at times, fallen to my lot to partake of in Europe.

The wild turkey is excellent food, and has this remarkable property, that the fat is never offensive to the stomach.

When Kentuckey was first settled, it abounded with turkeys to such a degree that the settlers said the light was often interrupted by them. Though this may be considered a figure, still it is well known that they were extremely numerous, so much so that he was esteemed an indifferent sportsman who could not kill a dozen in a day. Even at this time they are sold in Lexington market for half a dollar a pair. They are, notwithstand-

ing, becoming very scarce, and, addicted as all classes of people in that state are to an intemperate predeliction for destroying every living aboriginal creature, their total extinction must be near at hand. They yet abound in this Ohio State, and possibly will, for many years; till it becomes more peopled.

I cannot pretend that wild turkeys differ in any striking manner from the domestic ones I have every where seen, except the length of their wings; their superior plumage, their attitude and lively expression in walking. The cock too has a beard composed of about one hundred hairs which hangs in a streamer from under the bick. The hair is thicker than a pig's bristle, and the length accords with the age. In the young the beard is hardly perceptible, in the old it descends more than half a foot. I have killed a wild turkey cock which weighed thirty pounds and whose beard was ten

inches long: the flesh was execrable, nearly as hard as iron, and as black as jet. The young on the contrary are white and tender, delicate meat, and of exquisite flavor.

Wild turkeys are gregarious. The flocks from fifty to sixty. They are migratory. They winter to the southward and return in the spring to the deepest recesses of the woods, where they construct their nests with such care and concealment, that few instances ever occur of the eggs or young being found. Where eggs have been obtained and hatched under a domestic turkey, the young shew great disposition to thrive and remain about the house very contentedly till their first spring, when they rise, without indicating a previous talent for flying, into the air, take a few circles round the heads of their old friends and make for a wilderness whence they never more return.

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Having chatted with my Mandau associate for some time on this and other subjects, the hours were so much beguiled, that it was full time to make some kind of shade under which to rest. This was done in a few moments: two forked poles were cut and driven in the ground six feet from each other. A third pole was cut and placed on three forks. Against this upper cross pole were laid branches so matted with shrubs, that by lying to leeward no wind could be felt, and, by making a bed of dry leaves of good depth, and keeping the feet towards the fire, no cold or inconvenience could be apprehended. For fear this preparatory business should expose you to too sleepy a visitation, and my letter to contempt, I close for the present.

THE END OF VOL. I.

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